

Mythic Rhetoric: Influence and Manipulation in  
Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Pullman's *His Dark Materials*

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the  
Manchester Metropolitan University for the degree of  
Masters by Research

Department of Interdisciplinary Studies  
MMU Cheshire

2015

## Declaration

I declare that this is my own work, that I have followed the code of academic good conduct and have sought, where necessary, advice and guidance on the proper presentation of my work.

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## Acknowledgments

For my family and friends: without your love, support and patience I could not have hoped to achieve what I have. I love you all.

To my tutors; I cannot thank you enough; I'm eternally grateful for your never-ending encouragement and invaluable assistance throughout the year.

Finally, to the authors who have influenced my writing: their stories are my inspiration and without them, this simply would not have happened.

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## Abstract

John Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* are two grand feats of mythic storytelling. Through their compelling stories, reinforced by influential rhetoric, each possesses the ability to affect individuals who read them. These myths work to influence their audiences without the author's own personal beliefs being forced upon them (such as Milton's scathing condemnation of certain styles of poetry, or Pullman's overtly critical view of Christianity). Instead, the rhetoric used to tell these stories work in more subtle ways and with the aim of realising a different goal. These myths seek to do more than simply entertain and this thesis argues that each myth acts as a guide that can help readers engage with a more dialectic way of thinking.

Following cues from Kenneth Burke's approach to rhetorical theory and symbolic action, as well as Claude Lévi-Strauss' Structuralist mytheme concept, this thesis demonstrates how each myth's structure, narrative content, and speeches made by key characters, portray the author's intended message. *Paradise Lost* and *His Dark Materials* may tell their stories in different ways, but each is grounded in their shared use of the Christian story of the Fall of Man, a story that each author adapts to tell equally familiar yet unfamiliar tales, full of diverse characters believing in different ideals. These characters argue, debate and reason for what they believe in and, as a result, establish an eclectic range of arguments for readers to consider and learn from as they engage with each myth.

This thesis focuses on the effect of each author's rhetoric and how it is used to influence their audiences to engage in new ways of thinking.

## Note on Abbreviations

The following abbreviations will appear in reference to the following titles, though occasionally their full titles will also be used:

*Paradise Lost: PL*

*His Dark Materials: HDM*

*Northern Lights: NL*

*The Subtle Knife: TSK*

*The Amber Spyglass: TAS*

## Introduction

As a child, I was certain that the myths I read, I read purely for their entertainment value. Tales about unsuspecting heroes being whisked away on exciting adventures was something I could not get enough of and stories from J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis and Philip Pullman were particularly appealing. However, my younger self never consciously considered that there might be something more meaningful hiding away in the pages of these books: what else was there for me to think about when I had fully realised worlds to explore at my fingertips? It never crossed my mind that the authors of my favourite stories had taken great care to build their worlds not only to excite my imagination, but also to influence the way I thought.

This was, however, something that my parents were concerned with and they were hesitant to let me read Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials*. I remember being filled with delight but also great anxiety when I first got my hands on *Northern Lights*; the first volume in the trilogy. I cannot remember why I was so excited in anticipation of reading the book; perhaps it stemmed from the vague notion that it was the focus of some great and mysterious controversy. Regardless, I remember reassuring them that the story was all I was interested in; not the negative way in which it was meant to depict Christianity. I devoured the story eagerly, though looking back I find it odd I never considered its connection to Christianity more seriously. The latter two books of the trilogy are more heavily connected to religion, with talk of sin, redemption, angels, as well as God (referred to as The Authority) and thus connections to Christianity are made starkly apparent. The trilogy also presents a version of the church, known as The Magisterium, which is power hungry and corrupt. However, this representation did not reflect the version of the church that I had grown up with, so perhaps that is why I believed I was treating these books, simply, as a story.

While the notion of influence can carry sinister connotations, particularly in relation to a children's book, being affected by an authors' work is inevitable. Geraldine DeLuca comments on how allegory in children's literature, where an author may try to instil a sense of morality or spiritual meaning in their stories "has traditionally been regarded with suspicion [...] as being too doctrinal and mechanical" which carries with it the suggestion that a children's story should be more straightforward, focused more on entertainment than anything else (DeLuca, 4). However, by simply reading a book, a reader opens themselves up to its influence or, as this thesis will discuss, its rhetoric. The reader's initial reaction may be simple: they may either like or dislike the story, but engaging with said story can also lead to the unconscious interpretation of its material. The symbols featured within the story can influence how we make sense of it, with symbols including the author's language choices, the use of illustrations (if any) or the layout used to present the story. Kenneth Burke, a rhetorical theorist, discusses this notion of myth in conjunction with rhetoric, by arguing that "man [is] the symbol-using, symbol-making, and symbol-misusing animal" (Burke, 60). It is a point that goes toward explaining his definition of rhetoric, first published in 1950 in *A Rhetoric of Motives*, where he views "language as symbolic action", inherently tied to rhetoric as part of a system of "identification" (Burke, 191).

First, Burke emphasises that symbolic action differs from "symbolism", which he suggests can imply "the unreality of the world in which we live, as though nothing could be what it is" (Burke, 79). Symbolic action actually does the opposite, referring to how the symbolic nature of language defines, rather than masks, how we understand and engage with the world around us. In essence, language enables us to connect with things even if they are not physically present. Burke uses the example of building a house and writing a



poem about building a house to demonstrate this point. The former is practical, the latter symbolic; just because we may not be participating in the practical act of building a house does not mean that we are incapable of comprehending how it is done (Burke, 79-80). From this, Burke goes on to discuss the idea of identification, which relates to the connection apparent between a speaker and a listener. He explains that it is the intention of the speaker to motivate the listener to respond and make their own choices, rather than convince them to adopt an idea; however, it is a fine-line to tread (Coupe, *Ecology*, 67).

Burke explains identification like this:

A speaker persuades an audience by the use of stylistic identifications; his act of persuasion may be for the purpose of causing the audience to identify with the speaker's interests; and the speaker draws on identification of interests to establish rapport between himself and his audience (Burke 191).

The idea is quite simple: a speaker will provide their audience with symbols they may recognise in the hope that what is said will resonate with them. If it does, the audience will be more easily influenced by the speaker's argument and so be motivated to respond. Humankind is influenced by symbols ("granted, it doesn't come as much of a surprise"), but it is important to acknowledge how we make use of symbols every day to both consciously and subconsciously interpret the world around us (Burke, 56). Burke holds the view that this process of identification transfers easily to works of myth, which, being full of signs and symbols, are one of the best ways of helping us make sense of our real lives. Laurence Coupe observes that "in whatever [capacity] he is writing, [Burke] invariably refers to myth", evidently making use of a myth's symbolic meaning to more easily express his own ideas (Coupe, *Ecology*, 3). Burke's view contrasts with the more typical approach to rhetoric and

myth. Traditionally, rhetoric has been seen as a controlling tactic that focuses on convincing people to adopt a speaker's point of view instead of inviting them to think about it. Burke instead argues for an interpretive, open-minded use of rhetoric that enables audiences to think for themselves (Toye, 71-72).

This is where the idea of myths becomes important, as the contemporary view of myth is shifting to consider their significance more seriously. As Karen Armstrong argues, "it is...a mistake to regard myth as an inferior mode of thought" and, like Burke, she desires to ascribe more power to myth (Armstrong, 8). She also says that myth is "often [dismissed] as irrational and self-indulgent" but both she and Burke believe myths are capable of channelling deeper thought and enabling audiences to make clearer sense of the world around them (Armstrong, 2). Akin to Burke's approach are ideas put forward by the anthropologist, Claude Lévi-Strauss. His ideas about mythology and structure were published between 1964 and 1971 in a set of four volumes entitled *Mythologiques*. In these volumes he discusses the notion that, "myths get thought in man unbeknownst to him", going on to say that "for each scholar and each writer, the particular way he or she thinks and writes opens a new outlook for mankind" (Lévi-Strauss, 3-4). The suggestion is that myths have a way of getting into people's heads, whether through writing, reading or critiquing them. It is not just the stories they tell that makes them interesting, but the potential to interpret their content that makes them compelling too.

Just as the stories I read – including Tolkien's *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, Lewis' *Chronicles of Narnia* and Pullman's *HDM* – discussed various concepts, including friendship, morality, life and death, I found myself puzzling over these ideas quite seriously in relation to my own life. In retrospect, it is plain to see that many of these stories had a

profound effect on the way I thought, even if I was not entirely aware of it. In *Literary Theory*, Terry Eagleton comments on Lévi-Strauss' consideration of myth, saying that myths "are devices to think with, ways of classifying and organising reality, and this, rather than recounting any particular tale, is their point" (Eagleton, 90). While I may disagree with Lévi-Strauss' Structuralist approach to myth,<sup>1</sup> his point about myth classifying and organising reality, alongside Burke's approach to rhetoric, are intriguing to consider together.

Despite the length of time that has passed since their publication, I think it is important to consider the influence of both Lévi-Strauss' and Burke's ideas with present-day analysis. This includes looking at theorists like Laurence Coupe, whose most recent work on Burke was published in 2013, and Karen Armstrong, whose *A Short History of Myth* was published in 2005. Armstrong is also someone who Pullman has quoted in various discussions about his stories, including a conversation in 2004 with the Archbishop, Rowan Williams. Armstrong studies the importance of myths and sees them as being influential in a similar way to Lévi-Strauss, having argued that "a myth [...] can become an initiation that helps us to make a [...] rite of passage from one phase of life, one state of mind, to another"; myths provide structures that can help us make sense of the world that we live in (Armstrong, 148-149).

In my experience, reading myths did (and still does) provoke me to think about the life I lead away from the pages of a book and there are undeniably structures and patterns that can be seen to influence a reader. These structures are something that Lévi-Strauss came to call "mythemes", which can be summarised as the basic building blocks of meaning

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<sup>1</sup> It is considered somewhat dated and over simplified now: Wendy Doniger suggests that Lévi-Strauss can be seen as boiling "rich patterns of interpretation...down to a set of logical symbols" and setting aside the interpretive analysis of a story, which makes his approach appear too rigid and scientific for creative analysis (Lévi-Strauss, xiii).

that myths draw upon in order to tell their stories (Lévi-Strauss, ix). For example, the four stories mentioned previously follow the pattern of a quest fantasy; all involve young or child-like characters who unexpectedly find themselves involved in grand adventures, which take place in strange environments where the protagonists often find themselves facing a villainous antagonist (James, pg. 190). Despite their structurally similar narratives, they all succeed in engaging the attention of their audiences and appear different from one another because of how these similarities are rearranged. “Mythemes can be arranged in any order,” notes Wendy Doniger in her introduction to Lévi-Strauss’ *Myth and Meaning*, “thereby excluding cause and effect or chronology” (Lévi-Strauss, xiv). She uses the instance of a mother killing her son as one example, but says the mytheme can be flipped, so that the son kills the mother, and this rearrangement can lead to a different message coming out of a similar sounding story (Lévi-Strauss, xiv). What is important though, is that there is some kind of structure at the core of a story to keep it grounded and accessible.

This led me to consider what the significance of the similarities and differences between the myths I have read might be, in the hope of discovering why I find them to be so influential. Despite the often-outlandish content within myths, their core structures provide familiar ground on which readers can steady themselves as authors play around with different ideas to entertain and engage their audience’s attention. However, this sort of manipulation within myths can also be used to influence the audience and reveal didactic intentions. My thesis focuses on how influence appears in two interrelated myths: the aforementioned *His Dark Materials* trilogy from Philip Pullman,<sup>2</sup> as well as John Milton’s *Paradise Lost*. The connection between *HDM* and *PL* is apparent through a number of cues.

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<sup>2</sup> The trilogy consists of *Northern Lights*, *The Subtle Knife* and *The Amber Spyglass*, first published in 1995, 1997 and 2000 respectively.

The most obvious of these is in Pullman's *Acknowledgements* at the conclusion of his trilogy, wherein he names *PL* as one of three great influences on his narrative (*TAS*, 550).<sup>3</sup> *HDM* also takes its name from Book II, lines 910-919 of *PL*. Finally, throughout book three, *The Amber Spyglass*, Pullman uses quotations from *PL* to introduce some of the novel's chapters. For example, chapter five of *TAS* opens with a quotation from Book I of *PL* and this quotation draws distinct parallels between the two texts: "With ambitious aim / Against the throne and monarchy of God / Rais'd impious war in heav'n and battel proud" (*TAS*, 57). In this chapter, readers see Lord Asriel furthering his schemes of rebellion against The Authority and the quotation from Milton refers to Satan, who has recently committed a similar act of his own. In the opening few pages of the chapter the reader also observes description of "a fortress of basalt [that] seemed to grow out of the mountain"; it is not at all unlike Satan's fortress of "Pandaemonium" (coined by Milton, it means 'all the devils') in Hell and in each of their respective strongholds, these antagonists of heaven gather their forces for rebellion (*TAS*, 58 and *PL*, I:756). The similarity between these two characters is something I will elaborate on in Chapters Two and Three of this thesis.

Another similarity between these myths is that they are both bound to the mytheme of the Fall of Man; however, the way in which they make use of this story differs. For instance, Pullman subverts the idea that the Fall was a negative event and instead claims that it was actually a positive thing; he describes the act of Falling as "a necessary part of maturing" (Hunt, 114). He argues, "the Christian idea, that the Fall is a terrible thing [is] a pessimistic and defeatist view"; in this way, Pullman's story can be seen as a rebellion against widely held beliefs, but one that uses those same beliefs to add strength to his own

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<sup>3</sup> The other two he refers to are William Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience* (1794), as well as Heinrich von Kleist's *On the Marionette Theatre* (1810).

criticisms (Hunt, 114). While his views have been deemed aggressive (and various characters in his novel certainly do not shy away from disparaging religion),<sup>4</sup> I suggest he supports a more reasonable argument and that his story is not an absolute judgement against Christianity; instead, it encourages plurality of thought and reason. Pullman's message is supposed to ensure that individual's do not succumb to totalitarian control, whether it is social, political or religious. Similarly, Milton's *PL* also expands upon the Fall of Man. The multiple points of view that appear in *PL* form part of Milton's discussion about the use of logic and reason, which he sees as two essential strategies for an individual to make use of in their lives. Similar to Pullman, Milton can also be seen to posit the idea that the Fall was a "Fortunate Fall", but where Pullman wholeheartedly embraces the controversy of this idea, Lenz argues that "Milton edges nervously around [it]" (Lenz/Scott, 89). Regardless of how they approach the Fall, though, each myth appropriates this familiar story in a way that is both new but also recognisable, and this combination works to draw their readers in.

The concept presented by Lévi-Strauss, that there is a need for clear order and structure within myth, but that they can be manipulated and retold, is something that has developed over time, with numerous other writers commenting on similar ideas. In his essay, *On Fairy-Stories*,<sup>5</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien discussed the importance of a writer creating a believable "Secondary World", saying that if a mythological world is built convincingly, a "willing suspension of disbelief" will take hold of the reader, with concepts from reality also working to make the fantasy appear more realistic (Tolkien, 132). More recently, in 1999,

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<sup>4</sup> Mary Malone, a scientist but formerly a devoted nun says: "The Christian religion is a very powerful and convincing mistake, that's all" (*TAS*, 464).

<sup>5</sup> *On Fairy Stories* was published in 1947 though was first given as a lecture in 1939.

the late Terry Pratchett considered a similar point.<sup>6</sup> In his essay, 'Imaginary Worlds, Real Stories', Pratchett calls this concept "narrative causality" and the similarities between this concept, and those put forward by Tolkien and Lévi-Strauss are evident:

[The] theory of narrative causality [...] means that a story, once started, takes a shape. It picks up all the vibrations of all the other workings of that story that have ever been [...] A million unknowing actors have moved [...] through the pathways of stories [...] Stories don't care who takes part in them. All that matters is that the story gets told, that the story repeats (Pratchett, 166-167).

Pratchett's approach to the idea of 'narrative causality' is not new: "I can hardly claim ownership [...] apart from the name, because it seems to me to be a statement of the obvious" (Pratchett, 166). However, that does not undermine its importance and, like Lévi-Strauss, Pratchett acknowledges that there exist "patterns and similarities" in stories that are capable of changing (Pratchett, 166). He concludes that narrative causality "is such a wonderful tool for the writer" to make use of, as it enables them to create new stories which remain inherently connected to a grand tradition of storytelling (Pratchett, 166).

How a writer might adapt the original shape of a story means that their intentions might contradict those it is supposedly repeating, thus opening a story up to different interpretations. Reinterpreting a myth is not necessarily a bad thing, though; a story that was relevant a thousand years ago might not carry the same weight if told in exactly the same way now. The myth of *Beowulf*, presumed to have been written "in the first half of the eighth century", offers one such example (Greenblatt, 29). Many editions and criticisms of this myth have been published throughout the centuries with some, like Michael

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<sup>6</sup> Until his recent passing in March 2015, Pratchett was producing stories of science fiction and fantasy, with one of his most recent stories being 2014's *The Long Mars*.

Morpurgo's illustrated edition, being published as recently as 2013. In this version, the author begins his re-telling with the following translation of the poem: "Hear, and listen well, my friends, and I will tell you [...] an old story [...] it troubles us now as much as it ever did our ancestors" (*Beowulf*, 7). The story itself testifies to the enduring popularity and relevance of myths as a part of its own myth. This not only aggrandises the story that is about to unfold, but makes the act of storytelling more important by placing the same story in a long tradition that dates back to "our ancestors". However, if editions were still being written in the same Old English vernacular in which it was orated and later transcribed, it would be very difficult to comprehend today. The fact it is an illustrated edition is also significant, being aimed at children, the pictures also enable easier comprehension of the story and demonstrates another change in how the story is told.

Similar to the way in which stories have been re-appropriated and adapted throughout the centuries, the study of rhetoric can be seen in a similar light. Having been studied for well over two thousand years and thought to begin with "Plato's...work written in the opening decades of the fourth century B.C.", some contemporary critics champion Kenneth Burke's rethinking of the theory as the first to truly contend with the original theories put forward by the likes Plato, as well as Aristotle (Herrick, 1, Keith, 50). As Herrick suggests, "The influence of [Burke's] thought [...] regarding rhetoric, has been great" and has succeeded in renewing interest in a theory that permeates not only the contemporary study of rhetoric, but everyday life (Herrick, 232). As such, just as we still review and read old myths, like *Beowulf*, and compare others like *PL* and *HDM*, it seems wise to consider how some older theories can still be seen as relevant, too, as with Burke and Lévi-Strauss.



Most intriguing is the idea that a mythmaker can act as a subtle provocateur of sorts, capable of creating stories that can entertain, but also inspire their readers. This thesis demonstrates some of the ways in which John Milton and Philip Pullman attempt to evoke meaningful responses from their readers. In Chapter One, I examine the structures within *PL* and *HDM* and how these affect the reader's engagement with each myth. Milton maintains a poetic form that informs on the intended message of his myth; he aims to inspire readers to follow logical patterns of thought and make use of their ability to reason. The structure of Pullman's myth is more eclectic than Milton's, changing throughout the trilogy to emphasise his point about the importance of embracing the process of maturity and the journey from innocence to experience.

Chapter Two considers the effect of the narration in the opening of each myth and how these sections of narrative introduce a key character: Satan and Lord Asriel, respectively. My decision to focus on *Northern Lights*, rather than the entirety of *HDM* in Chapter Two (also true of my approach to Chapter Three) allows for a more focused, informative discussion of rhetoric and influence. In conjunction with the analysis of narration, Chapter Two also considers the effect of speeches made by Satan and Asriel and investigates how these engage the reader's attention. Once they have their reader's attention, these myths need to maintain it and one of the ways in which this is achieved is through connection to a figure that creates a sense of personal involvement for the reader. As such, Chapter Two also considers the effect of joint spectatorship and how the observations of the narrator in *PL*, and Lyra in *NL*, can affect the reader.

Chapter Three also analyses narration but instead focuses on how they build toward enhancing climactic speeches made toward the end of each myth. This chapter considers

how Eve from *PL* and Lyra have developed as the result of the influence put upon them by Satan and Lord Asriel. To understand how they have progressed, the chapter analyses their own rhetoric in opposition to Satan and Asriel's and considers how acts of reasoning and manipulation affect the audience's interpretation of the messages being posited through each myth. The conclusion reflects on how each myth makes use of rhetoric in its various forms as a means of influencing their audience.

Of the authors that I previously mentioned reading during my childhood, Philip Pullman is of particular concern here due to the more contemporary nature of his work. Although Tolkien's *The Hobbit* (1938) and *Lord of the Rings* (1950) have experienced a resurgence in popularity, due in part to Peter Jackson's cinematic adaptations, a great deal of critical analysis already exists on the texts. The same can be said of C.S. Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia*, (1950-1956). Pullman's *HDM* was released between 1995 and 2000 and has had numerous additions made to its mythology since the initial trilogy was completed, these include *Lyra's Oxford* (2003) and *Once Upon a Time in the North* (2008). Furthermore, at this time of writing, Pullman is currently working on another book to expand his already popular universe: "the eagerly anticipated [...] *Book of Dust*" (C. Butler, 10). This suggests a continued interest in the mythology he has created, and as such, I am interested to consider what makes his stories so influential. The world Pullman has created is one closely resembling ours in the present day, thus making it more recognisable to a twenty-first century audience.

As for John Milton's *PL*, his poem is still immensely popular as a canonical text. Some three hundred years after its publication, its theological, thematic and linguistic credibility is still a matter of intense study. Joseph Wittreich's "Lost Paradise Regained" (2011), Samuel

Fallon's "Milton's Strange God" (2012) and Sarah Morrison's "The Accommodating Serpent" (2009) are three such articles that consider these matters. *PL* is also irrevocably tied to *HDM*, which, as co-authors Arthur Bradley and Andrew Tate point out: "takes [it's] mythic framework [from *PL*] and recasts it with a series of figures who resemble Milton's *dramatis personae*" (Bradley/Tate, 62).<sup>7</sup> *PL* also continues to feature heavily in critical analysis, perhaps helped in part by its association to *HDM* in popular culture, but also due to its own authority. In an edition of *PL* that places Pullman's name alongside Milton's, the former dubs it "the central story of our lives" (Milton/Pullman, 10). Despite this, direct comparisons between *PL* and *HDM* are few and far between. While studies like Arthur Bradley and Andrew Tate's *The New Atheist Novel* (2011) draw on their similarities and discuss their close relationship, they do not engage with a close analysis of these texts alongside one another, as is my intention here.

Contemporary critical interest in Milton and Pullman is another reason for my decision to study them. Critical analysis of Pullman's work is continuously expanding; as recently as 2014 a collection of critical essays, collectively titled *Philip Pullman*, edited by Catherine Butler, was published. William Gray's 2010 publication, *Fantasy, Myth and the Measure of Truth*, is also important and investigates C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien, amongst other authors, but does so in the context of Pullman being the primary figure of concern. In his introduction, Gray argues that Pullman's work should be "seen as [...] the culmination of [...] mythopoeic fiction infused with [...] a particular kind of Romanticism" (Gray, 1).<sup>8</sup> From

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<sup>7</sup> Meaning of *dramatis personae*: his characters. Lord Asriel is one example, as he appears very similar to Satan.

<sup>8</sup> The OED defines mythopoeic as "That [which] creates or gives rise to a myth or myths; of, relating to, or characterized by the creation of myths".

this vantage point, Pullman's work emerges as the most recent interpretation of ideas and themes that have remained potent throughout years of fantasy fiction; that which stems from a focus on Christianity and emphasises a form of spiritual experience. Both Butler and Gray's books cover a variety of topics, ranging from discussing Pullman's "anti-religious stance" to the novel's representations of "gender", as well as the contemporary "cultural implications" of his stories (C. Butler, 14, Gray, 1). While the topics discussed in these texts are broad, critics acknowledge *HDM* to be a "challenging" tale that "demand[s] to be taken seriously"; it is a text that continues to attract great interest (C. Butler, 1). Some articles take a slightly different approach, though. Elisabeth Gruner's "Wrestling with Religion" (2011), compares Pullman's mythology (along with Terry Pratchett's *Discworld* series) to the original Christian stories that also inspired Milton. This criticism takes a more direct approach, presenting *HDM* as an influential text that stands in its own right, aside from its connections to *PL*.

An interest in rhetorical study is also on the rise. Not always studied in line with the literary genres of poetry and prose, rhetoric also appears in its own critical studies, often as part of detailed conversations concerning how it can affect matters of truth, morality and understanding in political and social fields. This can be seen in Hans Georg-Gadamer's *Truth and Method* (2013) and also in John Bender's *End of Enlightenment* (2011), the latter of which discusses Burke's theory of rhetoric, arguing it "illustrates many features we take to be characteristic of rhetorical inquiry under conditions of modernity" and emphasising how eclectic rhetoric is, being applicable in everything from "philosophical schools, political tracts [all the way up to] bodily practices" (Bender, 234). Rhetoric is significantly tied to politics, the school from which it originated, as a tool to make use of in council chambers

and auditoria to influence more effectively. Speeches saturate the media in the present day and using various forms of technological media to make oneself stand out is increasingly important, as with the cult of personality. As a result, there seems to be a turn toward rhetorical studies in an effort to understand what it can help achieve and how it can aid in deciphering what others are saying (Keith, 54-55).

Walter Jost and Wendy Olmsted's *A Companion to Rhetoric and Rhetorical Criticism* is of particular note concerning more recent rhetorical study (2006). It offers varied, insightful analysis of rhetorical theory, with some articles considering rhetoric as far back as Aristotle in the fourth century B.C., while others consider how rhetoric appears in the present day, in such fields as modern law and literature. This adds emphasis to what Bender considered the resurgence of interest in rhetorical study today; Jost and Olmsted, in particular, view understanding rhetoric as something that "can help demystify" the often "mystifying" field of rhetorical study (Jost, 162). Furthermore, both Sam Leith and Sophie Read (both 2012) apply rhetorical theory to *PL* in their own studies. Leith's book *"You Talkin' to Me?": Rhetoric from Aristotle to Obama* presents a contemporary approach to understanding rhetoric and, though a non-academic text, is useful nonetheless. His comedic and conversational (yet undoubtedly well-informed) style allows for easier comprehension of what can be a difficult topic to make sense of. In one chapter, Leith focuses on Milton's Satan as a "Champion of Rhetoric" and breaks down his speeches to look at the rhetorical devices that make him appear so compelling; I adopt a similar method in my analysis of speeches in Chapters Two and Three. Sophie Read's article, *Rhetoric and Rethinking in Bentley's Paradise Lost*, takes a different approach to analysing rhetoric, and sees her break down the "eccentric, hubristic work" of Richard Bentley who, in 1732, edited *PL* in an

attempt to correct Milton's rhetorical intent (Read, 211). Both studies are rather brief, with Leith discussing *PL* as one part of his entire approach to exploring the functions of rhetoric, while Read's essay is more a critique of Bentley's adaptation of *PL*, rather than of Milton's original rhetoric. That said, each offers insight into two different ways one might approach rhetorical theory, highlighting its multi-faceted functions. While works used in this thesis, from the likes of Burke,<sup>9</sup> Leith and Pratchett, may not come across as typically academic, they explain their theories and approaches to writing by making use of the very topics they aim to discuss. We can say they are a testament to the current consideration of rhetoric, which as argues Leith "is all around us" although "we don't [always] see it" we still respond to it because it appears so involved in our language and the way we communicate (Leith, 9).

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Having traced recent trends in rhetoric and in critical approaches to the focal texts of this project, a brief explanation of my use of the term "influence" is, I think, needed, as is an explanation of my choice in tone for some sections of this thesis. I have already mentioned how these myths aim to compel thought and action and attempt to influence their readers. Firstly, I say *influence* rather than *convince* because I do not believe the authors want to *convince* their audiences of anything. It is a fine-line to tread, but if the authors wanted to convince their audiences then they would contradict their aim of encouraging free thought. Just as Burke's approach to rhetoric implies interpretation is more important than persuasion, Pullman once claimed "if I were to say, this means that, or you must read it in that way, this would seem to have a particular authority that I don't want", making him a

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<sup>9</sup> Burke presents a non-standard style of theoretical writing. His style is described as entertaining, often making use of "puns, joke[s], and down-right comedy, sometimes descending into buffoonery", such as: "the universe would appear to be something like a cheese; it can be sliced an infinite number of ways" (Burke, 25).

hypocrite to his own purpose (Lenz/Scott, 122). These myths can instead be seen as guides, of a sort, helping readers to come to their own conclusions.

In both the introduction and conclusion of this essay, I have elected, at points, to adopt a conversational tone to exemplify my discussion, thus demonstrating my own understanding of rhetoric and capacity to make use of it effectively. I have also employed numerous rhetorical devices in an effort to enhance my argument and I have added an appendix containing definitions of the rhetorical terms that I use throughout. As for my justification, rhetoric is varied and situational (as Keith argues “different types of speeches work in different situations”) and ever since Aristotle and Cicero made use of rhetoric in Greece and Rome respectively, it has grown and developed to become an intrinsic part of how we interact and communicate with one another in many different ways (Keith, 30). I have made use of personal anecdotes as part of my *pathos* appeal, which aims to evoke an emotional response from the reader. In this instance, emotion does not mean joy or sadness, but more your own feeling toward something, which stands in line with Burke’s theory of identification; if you can relate to some of the things I have said, my words may become more influential. A more frequent use of the pronouns “I” and “we” has been used early on with the intention of establishing a rapport between us, to make us feel connected and engage your attention. This also has the added effect of establishing my own authority, as in, “I” am the one talking to “you”, and this subtly clarifies it is my intention to influence you. This, in turn, affects my *ethos* appeal (my appeal to authority) which I have also tried to validate through a *logos* appeal (presenting my work in a clear, logical fashion). In this case, by referencing and making use of critical analyses from other academics, critics and writers, past to present, I have provided *proof* to make my argument appear more credible. Doing all

of this is about following the expected sense of *decorum*: my primary audience is to those with an academic background in English Literature and so I need to meet certain standards. As such, the majority of the thesis will appear in the more academic tone that is to be expected, but rhetoric, at its core, is also about organising your argument in the most convincing way possible and, at the very least, this means it should be accessible to the audience (Keith, 35). Even if Milton and Pullman did not approach their works with rhetoric explicitly in mind, they inevitably make use of it, as I do, because rhetoric is bound up in the very function of our language (Eagleton, 73, Leith, 7).

Overall, while my aim in this thesis is not simply to point out the connections between Milton, Pullman and their texts (certainly they are apparent already) nor to condemn or reinforce the Christian religion in relation to them, these topics are nonetheless important to discuss as they are all bound up in the approach to rhetoric and influence that I outlined earlier. Rhetoric is the tool that cements each author's influence, intentional or otherwise. Pullman said: "I began to write [*HDM*] with little sense of plot, even less notion of theme, and only the vaguest idea of the characters" and yet many symbolic and influential ideas found their way into his work (*HDM*, xxxv). This process of writing opens up some interesting ideas to consider in Chapter One of this project concerning the use of rhetoric and the intentions of the author. In contrast to this, Milton's text appears a more planned endeavour, where, as a young man at university, the author claimed it was his intention to write a poem on the Genesis story (*PL*, viii). Despite their different approaches, each of their epics is clearly influential.

*Paradise Lost* and *His Dark Materials* may have been written over three hundred years apart and appear in drastically different genres (one a children's book, the other an



epic poem) but they still share a great many things in common. My thesis considers how the basic structure of these myths, as well their narration and numerous rhetorical speeches, come together to affect their readers and provoke them to respond. While I cannot detail how every reader is likely to have responded, I will suggest various outcomes and discuss the potential that other theorists and I have seen to exist in these myths. Both *PL* and *HDM* share distinct similarities in their narrative construction and how it is they choose to get their messages across. Ultimately, however, each writer seeks to encourage, not enforce, the plurality of thought and reason in the hope of inspiring their audiences to consider new ways of thinking.

## Chapter One - Establishing Structure

The ways in which *Paradise Lost* and *His Dark Materials* are structured makes their readers more receptive to the messages within the myth as the result of the content being made easily accessible. Sophie Read comments on this point regarding *PL*, saying that the poem is “imaginatively compelling [...] because of its rhetorical complexity: the poem depends on the reader’s ability to hold an attenuated sense in the mind [...] it demands attention” (Read, 209). Milton’s poem is woven together into regular form by an iambic pentameter (a feature I will explore in detail later) and this tight focus on structure, in line with inclusive word choices and engaging drama, ensure that the reader feels connected to the story. As Amanda Greenwell suggests, “what one sees affects what one believes”, and the effort made to include the reader through their observations encourages them to, as Rumrich puts it, “effectively interiorize the theological lessons contained within the [poem]” (Greenwell, 107, Rumrich, 250). This leads the reader to think more personally about the content and keeps them attentive throughout nearly ten thousand lines of poetry.

A similar attempt to influence the reader through structure can be seen in *HDM*. However, the technical structure of Pullman’s myth is intriguing because it acts as a reflection of the narrative structure. For example, *Northern Lights* focuses on a single character’s perspective (Lyra’s), and her story is divided into chapters across three separate parts, mapped onto locations: *Part 1: Oxford*, *Part 2: Bolvangar* and *Part 3: Svalbard*. However, this format changes in books two and three. Division by ‘Part’ disappears in the latter two books and by book three the layout appears more typographically fragmented, which distorts how readers engage with the story. By starting with a more formulaic structure in book one; Pullman makes it far easier for his readers to engage with the key

concepts and ideas that then progress throughout his story. As a result, when both the narrative events and the physical structures become more chaotic, the reader is still able to make sense of everything because of their earlier informed experiences.

The aim of this chapter is to understand how the structures of these myths help engage a reader's attention as a means of helping them make sense of the meaning. Claude Lévi-Strauss is important in this regard, particularly as his "writings focus not on what myths *mean*, but on what they *do*" (Leitch, 1275). While his theory may be a little dated, with Structuralism having since passed out of popular study, "The analogy [Lévi-Strauss] proposed—that cultural phenomena constitute exchanges of messages and that cultural codes may be analysed as language—remains a tacit assumption of many forms of cultural theory" (Lévi-Strauss, ix-x, Leitch, 1274). This is particularly true of the re-emerging interest in rhetoric that I outlined in my Introduction, especially in relation to Kenneth Burke's ideas about rhetoric and symbolic action. If cultural codes have meanings attached to them and are considered as a form of language, as Lévi-Strauss implies, and Burke sees language as a system of symbols that both identify and produce meaning (summarised with the aforementioned 'symbolic action'), then these ideas can be seen as part of how it is we understand works of myth, which are full of signs and symbols. Furthermore, Read writes that "structures of language can map structures of thought" and Toye elaborates on this point, saying that "ideas...cannot be separated from the language structures of which they are a part...it is futile to hope that we can drain away the 'rhetoric' to find the 'substance' that supposedly lies beneath language's deceptive surface" (Read, 210, Toye, 111). As such, rather than focusing on analysing structure alone, it is important to realise that understanding a myth's structure is just one part of making sense of the myth in its entirety.

Lévi-Strauss places emphasis on the idea that understanding a myth's structure will help readers to engage with the meaning it seeks to portray. This is what myths *do*: "to speak of rules and to speak of meaning is to speak of the same thing; if we take a look at the intellectual undertakings of mankind [...] recorded all over the world, the common denominator is always to introduce some kind of order" (Lévi-Strauss, 13). Having a logical structure makes it far easier for audiences to make sense of the messages being put across, so if a speaker structures their argument in a logical fashion, the audience will find them more convincing (Keith, 53-54). In rhetoric, this relates to Aristotle's *logos* appeal of an argument, where he emphasised the need of a speaker to use reason and appear to be speaking sense before going on to reinforce their argument. It is, after all, far easier to comprehend an idea if it is laid out in an orderly fashion and because myths are "a 'fanciful' creation of the mind", often appearing disordered, we need to try to find out "if there [is] some kind of order behind this apparent disorder" (Lévi-Strauss, 12). That said, contemporary study has moved away from focusing on Structuralism (the theory in which Lévi-Strauss' ideas were grounded). This is due, in part, to the perceived rigidity of its focus: textual analysis was often seen as too synchronic, where a text was taken as "an object in space rather than a movement in time" and seemed to disallow for more open interpretation of its content (Eagleton, 101). However, taking the time to consider the structure of a story as part of a larger analysis is still very important. As Hans Georg-Gadamer writes in *Truth a Method*: "Structure does not exist in itself, nor is it encountered in meditation [...] accidental to it; rather it acquires its proper being in being meditated" (Gadamer, 122). Structure plays an essential role in how we begin to interpret a myth's overall meaning: if we take the time to analyse and understand it properly, then we come closer to a more complete comprehension of a myth and its influence.

## Paradise Lost: Structure

When writing *Paradise Lost*, John Milton made the decision to go against the more common style of poetry seen in the seventeenth century. At a time when much poetry was still being written in what were perceived as more scholarly languages, such as Italian, French and Latin,<sup>10</sup> Milton resolved to write his epic in the English vernacular. Following his “determination to glorify [...] the English language in poetry”, he adopted blank verse without rhyme (Greenblatt, 1787). This decision threatened to undermine the dramatic potential of his poem as it defied the expected form. However, John Rumrich argues that “Milton frequently defied convention and reinvented decorum whenever he thought this was necessary for the expression of his highly original ideas and convictions” (Rumrich, 252). It demonstrates the hubristic mind-set that Milton possessed, but it also reflects the confidence with which he wrote, firmly “presenting himself as England’s prophetic bard” (Greenblatt, 1786). Writing in English also made his poetry accessible to a much wider audience in his own country, so that even those who could not read could still hear and comprehend the work. Furthermore, his appropriation of the Fall motif goes further to make his work stand out; it is not a direct retelling of the Biblical story, but rather an adaptation: “the Bible is less a sourcebook than a set of precedents for Milton’s storytelling” where he inserts “conflicting ideologies” into a belief system that many held (and still hold) to be true (Wittreich, 748). His assimilation – but also distortion – of Christian ideologies made his work appear simultaneously controversial and complimentary; *PL* can be read as praising God, but also questioning his authority because of significant twists in the narrative. Such twists include the decision to present Satan’s point of view of the war in heaven. The

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<sup>10</sup> Latin was “the usual language for collegiate poets and for poets who sought a European audience” (Greenblatt, 1787).

way in which Satan is portrayed in *PL* paints him in a sympathetic, even heroic light; a point that the critic John M. Steadman discusses in detail (whose work I refer to later), but it is also something other poets, like William Blake and Percy Bysshe Shelley, commented on by saying “that Milton seems to be on Satan’s side without realizing it” (*PL*, xvi). What Milton does by presenting these conflicting points of view is provide a more challenging version of the Fall story; one that leads his readers to think for themselves, rather than accept one point of view as being correct.

In *The Verse* at the start of *PL*, Milton justifies his reasons for making changes to the expected style of the poetic epic; for instance saying that he perceives rhyme to be “trivial and of no true musical delight” (*PL*, 2). This not only disparages work that does use rhyme (“much to their own vexation [and] hindrance”) but also elevates his own work in the process (*PL*, 2). Milton goes on to state that his efforts are an “esteemed example set, the first in English, of ancient liberty recovered to heroic poem from the troublesome and modern bondage of rhyming” (*PL*, 2). This statement is paramount to Milton’s influence, something the eighteenth century critic James Buchanan reinforced by commenting that *PL* is infused with “a just and noble relish for all that is beautiful and grand in the *Aeneid* and *Iliad*” (Gilliland, 27). Written by “Virgil in Latin” and “Homer in Greek” respectively, these two classics make use of the same blank-verse style used by Milton. Milton references these two poets in *The Verse* to make his own connection to their works clear (*PL*, 2). Hubristic though Milton’s claims may have been, the acceptance of *PL* as “an instant classic” into the pantheon of epic poetry presents Milton’s dramatic choices as being the right ones (*PL*, vii).

However, as Stephen Orgel argues in his introduction to *PL*, Milton’s skill and confidence still succumb to “the pressure of justification [which] extends to questions of

taste”, Orgel continues: “making the wrong choice, following false gods [(in this case, rejecting rhyme)], is as much an aesthetic issue as a moral and theological one” (*PL*, xv). To appeal to the audience in the right way, careful choices needed to be made and Milton was aware of the need to justify his actions. As such, clarification of his intent, as with *The Verse*, is also helped through the inclusion of *The Argument*, a short section that precedes each book in the poem to act as a summary of its content: “Eve relates to Adam her troublesome dream...Raphael comes down to Paradise, his appearance described... (*PL*, Book V, 115). These sections were added in at the request of Milton’s publisher and the poem was rearranged to become twelve books, as opposed to the original ten book version which, without the prefatory explanations, had been described as “puzzling and challenging” (*PL*, xiv). The new edition, through its extension to twelve books (for a better sense of cohesion), and added explanations, helped to clarify Milton’s intent and make the text easier to comprehend.

It is important to remember, though, that Milton also wanted to make an impact on his audience; his justification in *The Verse* is not an apology for subverting expectations, but rather a bold statement of his decision to change poetic standards for the better (*PL*, xv). As a period of great change and strife for the nation, which included the start of the English Civil War in 1642, as well as the execution of King Charles I in 1649, not to mention suffering his own personal agonies,<sup>11</sup> it is not surprising that Milton, as a respected writer and figure in a position of political influence, sought to make changes through his writing. Throughout his literary career, Milton wrote many political treatises, challenging social, political and

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<sup>11</sup> Milton went totally blind and lost his wife and son all in the same year. He was also imprisoned for a time, but later released in 1660.

religious expectations. His political writings included *Areopagitica* (1644) and *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* (1649). The former debated the management of publications and censorship in England and the latter addressed the divine right of kings and the public's right to remove a tyrannical monarch from power. By writing on topics deemed controversial, yet very important and relevant to the public, Milton's work became something to pay attention to. Similar results can be seen in the reception of *PL*, which, despite the changes Milton made to the poetic style, was once described as "an authority on the correct and effective use of the English language" and Milton's ability to get his message across in an influential way is certainly evident (Gilliland, 27).

That said, *PL* has not been immune to negative criticism. In the Introduction to this thesis, I noted Richard Bentley's attempt to make corrections to Milton's epic. The Anglo-American poet, T.S. Eliot, was also highly critical of Milton. Eliot condemned Milton as a poet "who had introduced a 'dissociation of sensibility'" to the genre, as though Milton had disrupted the established order by toying with traditional structures and thus "the influence of his epic [had become] a blight on English poetry" (*PL*, xxix, Murray, 67). However, both Bentley and Eliot's criticisms appear in the minority and stand in stark contrast to the praise that is more often given to Milton's work. Change was what Milton's contemporary audience wanted, and he sought to provide it for them. In a world seemingly ruled by chaos, he can be seen as an arbiter attempting to bring order to a disordered realm.

Milton's use of the blank-verse method, without rhyme and with the employment of an iambic pentameter, is paramount to this discussion of structure. The iambic pentameter is used as it is the closest poetic form that mimics everyday speech whilst remaining distinctly poetic. It brings utterances into a uniformed, decasyllabic style whose tight focus



urges readers to maintain their own focus. Writing in this way, without rhyme (“rhyme being no necessary adjunct or true ornament of poem or good verse”), also prevents readers from getting lost in the singsong style, or “jingling sound” that rhyme can sometimes ascribe to a text (*PL*, 2). It ensures the poem maintains the high, epic tone expected of the genre. Furthermore, unless chanced upon, rhyming is an intentional act and so unnatural in common speech. This is perhaps why Milton sought to abandon using it in conjunction with the iambic pentameter, which is very much an intentional act, but which creates the illusion of sounding natural. When laid out on the page as it is below, it becomes clear how Milton’s style maintains its regularity and rhythm, adding a subtle force behind each line:

Of **man’s** | first **dis**|o **be**|dience, | and **the**| fruit

**OF** | that **for**|bidden | tree, **whose** | mortal | taste

**Brought** | death **in**|to **the** | world, **and** | all **our** | woe,

**With** | loss **of** | Eden, | till **one** | greater | man

**Res**|tore **us**, | and **re**|gain **the** | blissful | seat

**Sing** | heaven|ly **muse** (l:1-6).

In this case, it makes for a particularly affective opening and it is significant that the first full stop does not appear until the sixteenth line. This lack of a pause drives home the purpose of the poem and the passion of the speaker. The poem retains a regular iambic pentameter of ten syllables to a line, although some variations inevitably occur, but as an overall result, the poem possesses greater power due to its maintained form. The exclusion of obvious poetic techniques, like rhyme, makes the poetry feel natural, akin to regular speech, yet the language being used elevates it above normal speech and so makes it appear grandiose and

ultimately more influential. In *Literary Theory*, Eagleton comments on the way in which poetry is consciously structured for maximum effect: “words are not just strung together for the sake of the thoughts they convey, as in ordinary speech, but with an eye to the patterns of similarity, opposition, parallelism [...] created by their sound, meaning, rhythm and connotations” (Eagleton, 86). Although *PL* mimics the functions of every day speech to appear more accessible, every word is placed intentionally and the rigid structure Milton implements ensures his message comes across clearly.

How the words themselves are influential is a matter I discuss in Chapter Two, however the significance of their sound and structure is something Philip Pullman comments on when discussing the oral tradition of the poem, and the power it possesses when read aloud:

Rolling swells and peals of sound, powerful rhythms and rich harmonies are at your command; and as you utter them you begin to realize that the sound you’re releasing from the words as you speak is part of the reason they’re there. The sound is part of the meaning (Milton/Pullman, 3).

The regular pattern and rhythm can also be linked to Lévi-Strauss’ mytheme concept; in this case the structure reflects what one expects to see in traditional epics, but by writing in English, Milton has subverted these expectations and yet still succeeds in making his poem accessible. Mythemes, after all, are “a kind of grammar, a set of relations beneath the surface of a narrative which [constitute] the myth’s true ‘meaning’” and by opening these up to a wider audience and presenting them in a straightforward way, it becomes more accessible and so easier to understand (Eagleton, 90). The emphasis on structure reinforces the core intentions of *PL* and so too Milton’s mythological message: that an individual can make use of their “intellectual, religious and political freedom[s]” and exercise their ability

to use reason and follow logical patterns of thought (Greenblatt, 1789). By mimicking real-life structures of language and keeping the poem grounded in English, Milton's poem is not only made easier to engage with, but the readers become more susceptible to the messages woven in as a result.

### *His Dark Materials: Structure*

Philip Pullman's myth works in much the same way as Milton's; the structure supports his intended message. In Pullman's case, he aims to encourage the use of reason and plurality of thought in a story that focuses on the process of maturation. The structure of *HDM* developed from the points that Pullman found most intriguing in *PL*; namely the implied idea that the pursuit of knowledge and the journey from innocence to experience is a good thing and should be embraced. Over the course of the trilogy, the structure of Pullman's story matures in its own way: first, appearing simple and straightforward in *Northern Lights*, second, becoming slightly more diverse in *The Subtle Knife* by following multiple characters perspectives, before ending with a more complex narrative structure in *The Amber Spyglass*. In this way, Pullman's trilogy mimics the process of maturation in our lives because of the way in which it is structured.

As previously mentioned, when Pullman began writing *HDM*, he lacked a solid sense of plot, theme and characters; although he knew he was modelling his story on *PL* (Milton/Pullman, 9). While the planning and production of his epic certainly differs from Milton's approach, whose aim to write a grand poem emerged whilst still at school, *HDM* is structured in a way that enables Pullman to get "his readers to see things they have never seen" by engaging them in a diverse, complex story (Greenwell, 116). Describing the process

of writing his myth, Pullman speaks of how the narrative came “out of the dark” as he sat at his desk, writing and rewriting his ideas (Pullman, *Perverse*, 17). Although derived from his mind, his myth was not the result of great planning and instead took on a life of its own; slowly germinating through the tender cultivation of his ideas before growing into the more solid construct we see today. In his development of *HDM*, Pullman said he came to realise he was telling much the same story as *PL*: “I wasn’t worried [...] I was well aware that there are many ways of telling the same story”, and the links to Lévi-Strauss and Pratchett are self-evident here (Milton/Pullman, 9).

Pullman’s myth is about discussing “the necessity of growing up” and each book in the trilogy is reflective of a stage in the human experience, which starts simply but is often unpredictable and not easily controlled as we mature (Milton/Pullman, 10). In this way, one might see the story as akin to Pullman’s method of writing, too. “I knew [...] not to force it”, said Pullman, and he describes how he let his ideas come forth naturally, such as deciding on a name for his protagonist: “I scribbled a word...Lyra. Lyra? [-----] Lyra ”<sup>12</sup> (Pullman, *Perverse*, 17). Rather than forcing inspiration, Pullman speaks of how ideas “feel [...] like discovery, not invention”, which is an approach at the heart of his myth’s message (Pullman, *Elementary*, 140).

Despite this emphasis, Pullman does acknowledge that having a clear structure and plan can help us to understand an idea, though he emphasises this should not be the main focus: the story itself is still the most important feature (Milton/Pullman, 8). While Pullman’s work may discuss the chaos and uncertainty of maturity, he still recognises that there needs to be a solid structure to ground his ideas – this frame allows for more

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<sup>12</sup> There is a long indentation added in this section of Pullman’s speech that indicates a pause, as a sign of contemplation.

influential rhetoric. Order is something we all try to maintain, as mentioned earlier with Lévi-Strauss, and Pullman's story dramatizes the more drastic lengths that some people will go to in order to instill and keep it (such as the act of intercision in *NL*, which effectively turns people into a soulless "*zombi*"), but what Pullman demonstrates by providing order to his work, is a sense of balance between creative expression and control (*NL*, 375). Yes, the myth becomes gradually fragmented, but this fragmentation is intentional because it informs on the narrative itself. As Greenwell argues, "Pullman's multiple manifestations of the visual [...] often function as means for character and thematic development", and so the changes he makes function as part of the story and enhance his message (Greenwell, 99).

Structure is also important because Pullman's myth traverses multiple universes (one can say the same of *PL*, which takes place in Heaven, Hell and Earth). To help his audience make sense of the movement between worlds, he provides a short paragraph at the start of each book. These function similarly to *The Argument* sections featured throughout *PL*. For example, the following segment precedes *TSK*; its placement is just before the contents page (and so unnumbered) and clarifies how the story will function:

THE SUBTLE KNIFE is the second part of a story in three volumes, which was begun in NORTHERN LIGHTS. This volume moves between three universes: the universe of NORTHERN LIGHTS, which is like ours, but different in many ways; the universe we know; and a third universe, which differs from ours in many ways again. The final volume of the trilogy, THE AMBER SPYGLASS, moves between several universes.

This is a helpful clarification that makes it easier for readers to comprehend how the story will function. *NL* is presented as the most straightforward volume in this way, with *TSK* and *TAS* being portrayed as becoming progressively complex. If we say that *HDM* reflects the human experience of maturing, one might view the three volumes like this: in the early

stages of our lives we are generally fixed in one location and surrounded by the same people, but as we grow up we may travel and see other places and encounter different people; finally, as we get even older, we are more likely to have travelled even further afield and have gathered more knowledge that will have influenced our lives. The three parts of *NL* can be seen as a condensed version of this model (it is largely why I elect to focus solely on *NL* in Chapter Two and Three of this thesis, so as to maintain a more focused analysis) and its heavily structured format eases the reader into the bigger changes that develop later on in the trilogy. *Part 1: Oxford* is set in a city, a familiar place of relative safety, *Part 2: Bolvangar* takes place in a town, it has recognisable features but exists in a location many miles from Lyra's home, and *Part 3: Svalbard*, appears like a whole other world – home to the armoured bears, it is far removed from the world Lyra grew up in. The intention of this focus is intriguing of itself; Pullman makes use of it to distort the reader's perception of the greater story hiding away in the background of *NL*, which is hinted at by intriguing ideas and concepts, such as the elusive question of what Dust is (the plot device that ultimately "[drives] the action of the entire trilogy") (Greenwell, 100). However, the way in which these ideas are masked makes for a dramatic conclusion to the first book and works as a point that expresses Pullman's own ideas about the importance of plural thought and reason, though I will elaborate more on the effect of this in Chapter Three.

James Herrick writes that rhetoric is about more than simply persuading an audience, it includes "other goals such as achieving clarity through the structured use of symbols, [as emphasised by Burke,] awakening our sense of beauty through the aesthetic potential in symbols [which brings] about mutual understanding" (Herrick, 7). One might say that Lyra's journey and the way in which *HDM* is structured, reinforces the symbolic

meaning of this myth. Lyra appears quite innocent in *NL*, but her experiences gradually change the way she understands the world around her and by the end of *TAS*, she appears a mature young woman. By providing his audience with a character who is dealing with experiences that they themselves are having (the book is a children's book, after all), or have had in the case of an adult reader, a connection is established between them: she is someone to whom they can relate and Lyra becomes a symbol of the maturation process that develops throughout the narrative. As such, the act of identification, outlined by Burke, takes place and enables readers to recognise and respond to Pullman's rhetoric.

However, the ideas and concepts that appear later on in the trilogy become more of a challenge to decipher because of the multi-faceted way Pullman tells his story. In *TAS*, Pullman toys with some intriguing typographical mechanics. While Lyra is being sedated by her mother, Mrs. Coulter, who kidnapped Lyra at the end of *TSK*, we are given fragmented glimpses of prose that frequently disrupt the reader's understanding of the events in the book. Pullman uses these fragmented sections, where Lyra is communicating with her deceased friend, Roger (he dies at the conclusion of *NL*), to create an air of mystery regarding her current situation. These fragments exist between chapters, distinctly separated from the structures readers have been used to seeing and so further distort their perception of the story. These sections appear eight times in *TAS* on pages 9, 10, 38, 47, 56, 68, 81 and 96 and do actually form a cohesive whole when they are read together. I have placed one example on a page of its own to replicate how they appear in the novel. These sections are typographically centred equidistant from the top and bottom of a page, as an aside from any main chapter:

*"I'll get us out of here Roger, I promise. And Will's coming, I'm sure he is!"*

*He didn't understand. He spread his pale hands and shook his head.*

*'I dunno who that is, and he won't come here," he said, "and if he does he won't know me.'*

*'He's coming to me,' she said 'and me and Will, oh, I don't know how, Roger, but I swear we'll help. And don't forget there's others on our side. There's Serafina and there's Iorek, and' (TAS, 38).*



Pullman is not afraid to defy Standard English, excluding “I” from “I’ll” and leaving sentences unfinished. The sparse and disconnected placement of these sections is quite distressing in contrast to the structures found in the earlier books. The same can be said of their narrative content; they become emotionally intense scenes as the reader sees Lyra becoming increasingly aware that she is under a drug-induced state, but incapable of doing anything to prevent it. Furthermore, the fact she is communing with her deceased friend, whose death she feels responsible for, adds to the horror of the situation because, like Lyra, the reader cannot fully comprehend what is happening to her. Certainly, then, Pullman does not fail to make use of physical structures to influence the story; as Millicent Lenz argues, “his own craftsmanship shows [...] the evocative nature of words [...] in his subtle wordplay” and his manipulation of structure affects the way in which readers interact with the story (Lenz/Scott, 10). The blending of the narrative and the technical structures are “fundamental to Pullman’s emphasis on [...] the importance of active spectatorship and broadening [his reader’s] fields of vision” (Greenwell, 104). His structures quite literally add a whole other dimension to his story.

### Chapter Conclusion

The structure of these stories has a lot to do with a simple idea: to elicit intrigue and engage an audience, and that is what I see as being at the heart of how these myths begin to convey their messages. Milton’s structure is a precise and calculated construct; it maintains a form that enhances his aim of inspiring reason and logical thought from his audience. Pullman’s is a more progressive entity, its style changes but does so at a pace readers can comprehend:

*HDM* reflects the reader's own experiences to help tell a story about the process and importance of maturing.

The structure of these texts is only a part of the whole, however; the stories that take place within these structures is another part of what makes them so compelling. These stories, as with the original Fall of Man motif, tell of a group of individuals and detail their journeys from a point of innocence to one of experience. This is a large part of what makes the Fall such a useful story to build others around; it is about an experience in which we all participate. As Rowan Williams said in his conversation with Pullman in 2004: "I think that as a religious person [and Pullman being an atheist], I would say [we can agree] that's a neutral phenomenon": regardless of one's beliefs, becoming intrigued and working out answers is a very human experience (*Soundcloud*, 11:40-45 min). I will now go on to consider the effect of the narration that builds up to speeches made by two key characters in each myth, Satan and Lord Asriel, as well as speeches made by these characters themselves. I will discuss the use of rhetorical devices and look at how these speeches, featured in the early stages of their myths, attempt to influence the reader to engage their attention to set up the rest of these stories.

## Chapter Two - Early Speeches and Establishing Influence

What follows in this chapter is a close analysis of the speeches made by Satan and Lord Asriel: the former made to Beelzebub after Satan's rebellion's expulsion from heaven and the latter to the Scholars and the Master of Jordan College. This chapter will also discuss sections of narration that precede these speeches as they possess qualities of their own that influence the audience's reception. The sections I have selected to analyse appear early on in each myth, with Satan's speech being made in Book I of *Paradise Lost* and Lord Asriel's speech appearing in the second chapter of *Northern Lights*.

Both myths share many similarities in how they engage their reader's attention and their rhetoric can be seen as dialectic in how it functions. Aristotle considered dialectic as the "method of probable reasoning" and rhetoric as "a counterpart of dialectic" (OED Online, Caplan, 14).<sup>13</sup> The rhetorical speeches made early on in these myths are acts that demonstrate probable reasoning themselves; they work to influence their audience to consider the speaker's point of view and guide them to participate in an "examination [of] the truth of an opinion" (Caplan, 14). Examining the "truth" of an opinion implies there is a correct answer to the ideas being expressed, but as these texts are about encouraging the audience to form their own opinions, we can instead consider Caplan's statement to mean the following: the rhetorical influence of these speeches encourages the reader to begin forming their own ideas through a consideration of numerous points of view. This sort of

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<sup>13</sup> "It is thus evident that Rhetoric does not deal with any one definite class of subjects, but, like Dialectic, [is of general application]" (Aristotle: *Rhetoric*, Part 1 Section 14). This is something we have already seen suggested by Burke. Aristotle continues: "also, that it is useful; and further, that its function is not so much to persuade, as to find out in each case the existing means of persuasion. The same holds good in respect to all the other arts. For instance, it is not the function of medicine to restore a patient to health, but only to promote this end as far as possible; for even those whose recovery is impossible may be properly treated. It is further evident that it belongs to Rhetoric to discover the real and apparent means of persuasion, just as it belongs to Dialectic to discover the real and apparent syllogism" (Aristotle: *Rhetoric*, Part 1 Section 14).

ideal can be seen in more recent rhetorical theory too. For instance, when considering poetry, Burke writes that “a poem, by shifting the imagery of its metaphors, permits us to contemplate the subject from the point of various objects. This effect is dialectical in the sense that we see something in terms of some other” (Burke, 268). As illustrations of this, one might consider the opposing sides of God and Satan in *PL*, as each provides alternative views of the morality of the War in Heaven, or Satan and Eve, as they discuss the vices and virtues of the forbidden fruit. These are examples that invite readers to observe (but then also participate) in acts of reasoned discussion.

To assist in their efforts of engaging their reader’s attention and establish their influence, both Milton and Pullman begin their stories by introducing a compelling character through intriguing narrative descriptions. After introducing these characters, the authors then have them express ideas that are meant to pull the reader into the story on a more personal level. One of the ways in which this personal feeling of immersion is achieved is through the inclusion of a figure who, like the reader, observes the characters of Satan and Lord Asriel (as two experienced *rheto*rs)<sup>14</sup> giving their speeches. By providing someone with whom the reader can connect, both *PL* and *NL* invite a sense of joint spectatorship as their readers engage with each myth. In *PL*, the figure to relate to is the narrator and in *NL*, it is Lyra Belacqua.

Milton presents the narrator as being a supposedly simple man who pleads with a “heavenly muse” to endow him with the ability to “justify the ways of God to men” (I:6-26). This shows the narrator as a flawed individual, requiring aid from a more knowledgeable, divine being, but this has the positive effect of humanising him, thus making him more

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<sup>14</sup> A master of rhetoric/an orator.

relatable. The voice of the narrator is what carries the reader throughout the entire poem and so establishing a connection, and ensuring it remains firm, is essential. The act of appealing to a muse is also a feature in classical myths and shows that *PL* adheres to traditional expectations. In *The Age of Milton*, C.A. Patrides discusses the “great revival of classical learning” that took place in the seventeenth century, this entailed not only reviewing and reading classical works of literature, many of which Milton was influenced by (including the *Aeneid* and *Iliad*), but also a return to studying older subjects too, including rhetoric (Patrides, 312). If the reader can relate to the narrator through his human characteristics, and simultaneously sees him as being connected to a figure of divine authority (the traditional muse), it grants the narrator more authority over the reader, which makes it more likely they will pay attention to what he (or she, as one of the narrative perspectives here is female) discusses. Such circumstances occur in older epics, such as Dante’s connection to his guide, Virgil, in Dante Alighieri’s *The Divine Comedy* (completed in 1321) and Milton can be seen to encourage a similar relationship in his myth as a way of connecting his readers to *PL*.<sup>15</sup>

In *NL*, the sense of joint spectatorship comes through Lyra. She is described as “a coarse and greedy little savage, for the most part” who does little more with her time other than play and cause mischief, though never maliciously (*NL*, 37). Lyra is closely aligned to Pullman’s target audience of children and young adults. Her sense of fun and excitement, but also her curiosity, is what connects her to the audience, as is the way in which she reveres Lord Asriel. Looking up to adults (positively or negatively) is what children do and

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<sup>15</sup> George Butler observes that “Milton’s treatment of classical myth sometimes departs from his likeliest Greek and Roman sources; on certain points, it more closely resembles Dante’s Christianization of the ancient texts”: this is also evident through his use of religious language, such as the church, sin, redemption and angels (G. Butler, 352).

“one of the ways we differentiate children from adults is that we say [children] are ‘still learning’” and as a very distinct authoritative figure, it is not surprising that Asriel has the ability to hook Lyra and the reader into the rest of the story: he is someone to learn from (Gruner, 216). When Asriel begins speaking to the Scholars in chapter two of *NL*, it becomes clear that Lyra knows just as little about what he is saying as the reader does; what is clear is that what he says is very interesting to his audience. As such, Lyra and the reader become connected through their curiosity regarding what it is that Asriel has to say.

The implication in *NL*, as in *PL*, is that through association with a naïve character, the readers of these myths will more easily settle in and engage with the story. The reader is able to participate in the process of identification, as outlined by Burke, because of their shared inexperience. The rhetoric of these myths becomes more influential as “readers enter...an unfamiliar world...[and are] confronted with the hard task of making sense [of it]” and so seeing these myths described by, or told through the perspective of a figure who is also learning, helps the reader better understand what is going on (Gruner, 232 and Greenwell, 102). Being partnered with a supposedly ignorant character could be perceived as a condescending approach to storytelling, but as mentioned in my Introduction, there is a fine line to tread between convincing your audience to believe something and encouraging them to consider an idea. Ultimately, the approach taken by Milton and Pullman makes it far easier for their readers to connect to the complex ideas presented in their myths because of the process of identification (Leith, 75). As such, rather than viewing these myths as being condescendingly ‘dumbed down’, what they do instead is to make their stories more accessible for their audiences and so the dialectic function of these myths comes through.

Working in this way is an example of each author establishing the *ethos* and *pathos* appeal of their own arguments. *Ethos* concerns how a speaker presents themselves to their audience, making them appear authoritative, and *pathos* is an appeal to an audience's emotions. Emotion, in the rhetorical sense, focuses on how the audience sees itself as personally invested in an idea beyond the scope of the idea being presented logically (*logos*) or accepting it because it comes from someone authoritative (*ethos*) (Herrick, 88). All are important appeals, but are effective in different ways. For instance, the early *pathos* appeal in *NL* comes through many of the points raised in Asriel's speech that are intriguing because they remain unanswered for a long time: Who is Grumman? What are *panserbørne*? What exactly is Dust? Asriel lures the audience in by appealing to them as an authoritative figure himself, and his argument is presented clearly and logically, but it is the appeal to the audience's emotional curiosity that remains most effective throughout the story; the lure of finding answers to these questions (and more) makes the journey emotionally compelling. Even Aristotle, who "wished that all communication could be transacted only through *logos*" alone, acknowledged the effect of the *pathos* appeal (Burton, *Silva Rhetoricae*).

Whether adopting the voice of a narrator or focusing on a specific character, the author is still very much the architect of the myth. Each author put pen to paper and had their characters speak; it is thus possible to perceive a character's words as the author's own. Of course, it is not simple or clear cut: the reader is not to know for certain what the author's intention is unless explicitly told, even then, how can one be sure? I refer again to Pullman's comment: "if I were to say, this means that, or you must read it in that way, this would seem to have a particular authority that I don't want" (Lenz/Scott, 122). In these stories, what is important is the reader's own interpretation and the way they can make

discoveries that go beyond what the author originally intended. Henry Weinfield comments on the difficulty of a writer making claims with their own voice. Using *PL* as an example, he argues that Milton cannot express his ideas “*in propria persona*—<sup>[16]</sup> and this, in fact, is why he puts [them] into the mouths of the devils” (Weinfield, 196). Milton’s work can be seen as controversial because of this point, particularly as he was a believing Christian in the religious climate of the seventeenth century. Making claims about God and his goodness in his own voice would have been a far more challenging and troubling task. For a modern audience, much of this controversy is absent from our reading of *PL*, instead the poem appears more overtly “heuristic” and while the religious content may not be taken as seriously as it once was, it is still engaging “for what it releases and enables” (Weinfield, 195). The way in which Milton tells his story presents intriguing and provocative questions for the reader to think about, even if they do not think about it from a religious standpoint. The multi-faceted, dialectic way in which *PL* is told can lead readers to make more well-rounded conclusions (of their own choosing). As such, “we need to see *into* the rhetoric rather than *beyond* it” as it will help us better understanding how it is that these works are affective which, in turn, can then help us to decipher and interpret what we think they may mean (Toye, 2).

For both myths, then, there exist the observers and the observed. The readers of these myths (as observers themselves) are linked with the observers in the stories and they share a common desire to comprehend the ideas and skills employed by the master *rhetors* in each text (the observed). For better or worse, Satan and Asriel are figures for the characters and the readers to learn from and the eloquent speeches they give are

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<sup>16</sup> This legal term describes a person who has chosen to argue his or her own case, without the use of an attorney, but is applicable in this context too.



undeniably influential. In order to find out how these *rheto*rs appear so engaging, we must investigate how Milton and Pullman establish these characters. First, by taking a look at the language used in the narrative descriptions that build up to their speeches, and second, by considering the speeches themselves.

### Paradise Lost: Narrative engagement

Prior to Satan's first speech the audience is provided with a description of the fallen angel and the place in which he and his fellow angels find themselves following their expulsion from heaven. In this section of the poem, which runs from lines 27 to 83,<sup>17</sup> Milton uses a number of rhetorical devices that make the narration look like a *philippic* speech—a speech that attacks and criticises someone or something—but which can actually be seen as a *panegyric* speech, which elevates the target being discussed. In this instance, the narration makes Satan appear as a curiously appealing figure. The first part of the narration (lines 27-33, quoted below) acts as an introduction that gets the audience interested in “who” it is that is responsible for the Fall of Man and “what” happened to lead up to it:

Say first, for heaven hides nothing from thy view  
Nor the deep tract of hell, say first what cause  
Moved our grand parents in that happy state,  
Favoured of heaven so highly, to fall off  
From their creator, and transgress his will  
For one restraint, lords of the world besides?  
Who first seduced them to that foul revolt? (l:27-33).

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<sup>17</sup> For the quotation in full, see the Appendix.

The repetition of “say first” implies urgency and the two questions being asked are essential to piquing a reader’s curiosity as they ultimately lead them to consider the important question: why did this happen? The way in which these questions are asked is evidence of *hypophora*, whereby the narrator asks a series of *rhetorical questions* but then provides an answer for them; this is what we are given in lines 34-83, analysed shortly. *Rhetorical questions* (also called *erotema*) are often used to emphasise a point, though can also be used for sarcasm, irony, or to provoke the audience to think. In this instance these questions aid in building tension as the answer given to the question “[w]ho first seduced them to that foul revolt?” is decidedly vague. Instead of clearly stating the name of the one responsible, the delay grants the narrator a chance to build up this supposedly elusive figure’s reputation toward a more dramatic *climax*. The use of *alliteration* (“**h**eaven **h**ides” and “**h**ell”) and *assonance* (the “o” sounds in “favoured of heaven so highly to fall off”) make the questions being asked sound more dramatic. Combined as they are over a few lines, they pack a particularly powerful punch when heard aloud. This makes for a succinct yet striking opening for the narrator to build from: “Say first, for heaven hides nothing from thy view / Nor the deep tract of hell” (l:27-28). The narration carries on to tell the reader more about who it is that was responsible for the Fall of Man and also hints at what happened in the heavenly war that preceded it. Doing this is meant to intrigue the reader all the more:

The infernal serpent; he it was, whose guile  
 Stirred up with envy and revenge, deceived  
 The mother of mankind, what time his pride  
 Had cast him out from heaven, with all his host  
 Of rebel angels, by whose aid aspiring  
 To set himself above his peers,  
 He trusted to have equalled the most high (l:34-40).

Here we see evidence of *hysteron proteron*, a rhetorical device that places the order of words back to front, so in this case, the opening line could read: “it was the infernal serpent who sought to deceive the mother of mankind and his guile was stirred up with thoughts of envy and revenge”. Granted, this adaptation sounds more like prose than verse and while *hysteron proteron* can cause the phrasing of a sentence to sound more poetic, the reason for its use here is to draw attention to an important point. In this case, the narrator wants the reader to focus on “the infernal serpent” from the very beginning and so it is the first thing they see following the *rhetorical question* on line thirty-three. Calling Satan “the infernal serpent” is also use of an *epitheton*, which is when someone’s name is replaced with a more descriptive title. This device is used frequently throughout *PL* to both positive and negative effect. For example, when talking about God, it is used to elevate his status by calling him “the almighty”, but for Satan, it is used negatively, as in “the infernal serpent”, which presents him as being villainous by suggesting he possesses subversive, manipulative qualities.

This descriptive section of narration runs on for over fifty lines with the irony of delaying naming Satan being that the narrator and the reader (particularly in the case of Milton’s contemporaries) both know who is responsible for the Fall. Before the name is revealed, the narrator establishes this figure’s infamous reputation; for example: he “Raised impious war in heaven and battle proud”, “Nine times the space that measures day and night / To mortal men, he and his horrid crew / Lay vanquished” (I:43 and I:50-52). The narrator’s descriptions make it hard not to be impressed but also fearful, as Steadman argues: “Milton’s portrayal of the fallen archangel was sublime. Satan’s entire role was filled with incidents that could elevate and terrify the imagination of the reader” (Steadman, 257).

Building up to Satan's named introduction in this manner, by delaying the reveal through informative descriptions, is called *sythrophe* and at the *climax* of the narration the question of "who" is finally answered properly: "the arch-enemy, / And thence in heaven called Satan" (I:82-83). Ending with the announcement of Satan's name grants him a high degree of pomp; he might be a villain, but the narrator sets him up as being an undeniably important figure: Satan is someone whom we should fear and revere in equal measure and his influence only becomes greater from this point onward.

God is still supposed to be the 'good guy' here, though, and *philippic* implications can override *panegyric* ones. This is made clear in the descriptions provided about the place Satan finds himself. Hell appears very much like a prison and so the place of an offender, not a hero. Milton writes that Satan was:

Hurled headlong flaming from the ethereal sky

.....

To bottomless perdition, there to dwell

In adamantine chains and penal fire,

.....

..... here their prison ordained

In utter darkness, .....

O how unlike the place from whence they fell! (I:45-75).

The "prison" analogy is made very clear with reference to "chains" and use of the word "penal", which is defined as "of or relating to punishment" (OED Online). Satan's punishment is also described as being the result of God's "eternal justice" where the word "justice"

indicates that Satan did wrong and so was rightly condemned to hell following God's judgement (I:70). Other descriptions enhance the *philippic* potential of the speech as they also show Satan as being a foolish character: "he opposed; and with ambitious aim [...] Raised impious war in heaven and battle proud / With vain attempt", "his doom / Reserved him to more wrath" (I:41-42 and I:53-54). Words like "ambitious", "impious" and "doom" paint Satan as a foolish, defeated figure, particularly when contrasted to God who is described as having "utmost power" and being "heaven's perpetual king" (I:103 and I:131). These descriptions reinforce the idea that this is a *philippic* speech and this is certainly the view Milton would have wanted to project, at least on the surface of the poem. After all, one must remember that *PL* is a dramatized version of an event that many religious people consider as a form of truth, thus appearing to side with Satan can be a troubling notion.

However, the actual duality of this section—the potential to see Milton's narration as both positively and negatively introducing Satan—makes the poem all the more interesting because of what it enables: "Narrative, for Milton, offers itself as a uniquely powerful way to tackle some of the most difficult metaphysical challenges" (Fallon, 35). Rhetoric is important here because it enables a "dynamic quality" in its use, and so Milton's narrative becomes more compelling because it presents multiple sides from which to view the events of the myth (Toye, 111). The final decision of how to view Satan (and by association, God) is left up to the reader's own interpretation after they engage with numerous arguments throughout *Paradise Lost*.

## Satan's silver-tongue

Satan's opening speech works to establish the *ethos* and *pathos* appeals of his argument.<sup>18</sup>

He begins by seeking to flatter Beelzebub, his second in command, in order to make the lesser angel feel valued despite their recent loss. Satan's aim is to rouse his lieutenant to action:

If thou beest he; but O how fallen! how changed  
From him, who in the happy realms of light  
Clothed with transcendent brightness didst outshine  
Myriads though bright: if he whom in mutual league,  
United thoughts and counsels, equal hope  
And hazard in the glorious enterprise,  
Joined with me once, now misery hath joined  
In equal ruin (I:84-91).

Satan does not give a detailed description of Beelzebub, "he affects to not even recognise [him]" due to his currently warped physical state, instead he quickly turns to distract Beelzebub from this point by discussing the past (Leith, 76). This is *apoplanesis* and *anamnesis* at work. *Apoplanesis* is the use of a distraction from a point raised in conversation (part of *digressio*—a digression) and *anamnesis* is the process of calling the past to mind. Satan wants to instil confidence back into his lieutenant and so focuses on Beelzebub's previously positive appearance to contrast the negative space in which they find themselves. Together, these devices establish Satan's *ethos* and establish a rapport

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<sup>18</sup> The entirety of this portion of Satan's speech can be found in the Appendix.

between himself and his lieutenant. By talking about how he used to look, Satan reminds Beelzebub of how important a figure he was (and so still is) so that he will begin to feel better about himself and listen to what Satan has to say. This can all be seen under the umbrella of *comprobatio* (simply, flattery) that enhances Satan's *pathos* appeal. Similar to the narrator, Satan also makes use of *assonance* (with elongated "o" and "e" sounds: "If **thou beest he**; but **O** how fallen! **how** changed...") to add emphasis to this speech and the use of *anacoluthon* (where he breaks off one sentence to begin another, as shown by the semi-colon), which furthers his melancholic appeal; the more upset Satan seems, the more likely it is that Beelzebub will think the sorrow being expressed is sincere. The use of *alliteration* plays on this too and the repetition of the similar "h" sound ("from **him**, **who** in **happy** realms of light...") builds up Satan's *amplificatio* (enlarged description) of Beelzebub so that saying he was "Clothed with transcendent brightness [and] / didst outshine myriads though bright..." sounds even more impressive. "Transcendent" and "myriads" imply Beelzebub has unmatched qualities about him, as though his glory is infinitely greater than countless others. This is, of course, a falsity, as Satan saw himself as the greatest angel and without equal, however saying that would evidently undermine the point he is trying to make. Satan instead works these devices together in order to elicit a positive reaction from Beelzebub, carefully crafting what he says.

Satan takes this further by presenting himself and Beelzebub as a unit. Read argues that "the rhetorical structures of [Satan's] utterances invite collaborative acts of cognition in his readers"; just as Satan works to inspire Beelzebub to take action, his words also provoke the audience reading to pay attention (Read, 209). He describes them as being in "mutual league", as having "united thought and counsels" and fighting with "equal hope", all of

which imply a connection exists between the two angels (I:87-88). To conclude his string of statements and reach the *climax* of this point about unity, Satan ends by making use of an *antithetical statement*: “in the glorious enterprise / Joined with me once, now joined / In equal ruin” (I:89-91). *Antithesis* balances one term with another that opposes it: Satan considers how their current experience contrasts their old one, but does so in order to back up his point that, just as they were joined in glory, they are now joined in misery. The important thing to consider is that they remain together despite their failure: their bond is what matters most. Emphasising their connection could be achieved through the simple use of plural pronouns, such as “we” and “our”, but Satan’s build up is more dramatic because of the rhetorical devices he uses; they cause his speech to sound more eloquent and so the *pathos* appeal becomes more influential. As Caplan suggests, “the aim of eloquence was to persuade men to truth and virtue” but Satan can be seen as subverting this ideal, instead, he uses eloquence to enhance his lies (Caplan, 22). It is important to note that he does not use any plural pronouns until the conclusion of his speech: “**We** may with more successful hope resolve / To wage by force or guile eternal war / Irreconcilable, to **our** grand foe” (I:120-122). The effect of this *climax* masks the fact that Satan actually focuses on himself throughout this speech. It runs for forty-one lines and in it he refers to himself five times and never calls Beelzebub by name, only passively as “he”, “him” and “thou”. Instead, Satan talks about the war being *his* conflict with God, and yet he does just enough to make his lieutenant feel connected to the events that he describes:

Yet joined with **me** once . . . . .  
 . . . . . yet not for those,  
 Nor what the potent victor in his rage  
 Can else inflict, do **I** repent or change,



Though changed in outward lustre; that fixed mind  
And high disdain, from sense of injured merit,  
That with the mightiest raised **me** to contend,  
And to the fierce contention brought along  
Innumerable force of spirits armed  
That durst dislike his reign, and **me** preferring,

.....

That glory never shall his wrath or might  
Extort from **me**. (I:90-111).

Satan asserts that he is in control but only because the other angels elevated him to this position of power: “the mightiest raised me to contend”. He uses *comprobatio* here, complimenting his supporters by labelling them as the “mightiest” despite their bitter loss, but his aim is to distract them by making them feel more important. He goes on to claim that the “Innumerable force of spirits” that fought with him were the ones who enabled him to lead because, for whatever reason *they* decided, they disliked God’s reign, and preferred the rule of Satan. Satan carefully manipulates the situation to suggest that they all worked together to get where they are now and that no one individual is to blame for their Fall (Leith, 76). Satan then goes on to make use of *hypophora*; in this instance it shows that he is aware of the doubts likely felt by his supporters. However by claiming that he knows what they will do next, he works to give them purpose again, thus asserting his *ethos* as leader:

..... What though the field be lost?

All is not lost; .....

And what is else to be overcome?

That glory never shall his wrath or might

Extort from me. (I:105-111).

Satan never goes so far as to admit outright that it was *his* thoughts, *his* plans and *his* actions that Beelzebub and the other rebel angels went along with, and he never admits that what they did was wrong either, instead he negotiates around these points with ambiguous phrases: “not for those [actions]...do I repent”. He moves off from this point quickly though (*apoplanesis* again) and instead makes bold claims about a new direction that he will lead them in. Satan wants to show Beelzebub and the others that hope remains for them yet: “We may with more successful hope resolve / To wage by force or guile eternal war” and so he dictates that by turning to a more subtle, manipulative kind of warfare, they will have purpose again (I:120-121).

In truth, it *was* Satan who manipulated the rebels to support him, but his speech clearly works to achieve his desired outcome as no sooner than he finishes does Beelzebub reply: “O prince, O chief of many thronèd powers, / That led the embattled seraphim to war[...] / Fearless, endangered heaven’s perpetual king” (I:28-131). Beelzebub recognises that Satan is in charge but he does not begin to blame or criticize him for their predicament, in fact he praises him, making use of *comprobatio*: he believes he and Satan *were* in partnership. Contrary to Satan’s speech, Beelzebub makes regular use of plural pronouns that imply he is convinced of them being of one mind: “foul defeat hath lost **us** heaven”, “though all **our** glory extinct”, “he **our** conqueror...hath left **us** this **our** spirit and strength entire” (I:135-46). Satan’s selfish intent is well hidden and it is a testament to his ability as a speaker that he still has the support of his followers despite losing heavenly paradise for their penal perdition. The fallen angels would be greatly angered if their leader revealed his

selfish intent, instead the *digressio* tactics used by Satan convince his audience that they should feel confident and united, even in their defeat.<sup>19</sup>

Satan rebelled so that he might rule, whereas Beelzebub and the others rebelled so that they might be free, without rule. The former has a selfish agenda, the others lack one and this is perhaps why Satan is the more convincing of the two: he has a plan and set designs to make them go further. Even if he failed to succeed in ruling heaven, he still succeeds in becoming a ruler, even if it is of hell: “Here at least / We shall be free” (he plays on the desires of the rebels by saying “We” which implies he shares in their goal, when in fact he only wants to be in charge) “To reign is worth ambition though in hell: / Better to reign in hell, than serve in heaven” (I:258-263). Prior to this, Beelzebub concludes his first speech by asking what they should do next and readers may well find themselves asking the same question, proving them to be as intrigued by Satan’s rhetoric as his auditor is: “What can it then avail though yet we feel / Strength undiminished, or eternal being / To undergo eternal punishment?” (I:153-155). Satan already has a plan forming in his mind:

Whereto with speedy words the arch-fiend replied.

Fallen cherub, to be weak is miserable

Doing or suffering: but of this be sure,

To do aught good never will be our task

But ever to do ill our sole delight,

As being contrary to his high will

Whom we resist. (I:157-162).

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<sup>19</sup> In his analysis of the same speech, Sam Leith puts it rather humorously: “Satan sets out to demonstrate that the defeat wasn’t really a defeat at all. Our (eternal) lives are ruined, but He couldn’t break our spirits – eh, lads? Eh?” (Leith, 76).

Satan hints at designs yet to unfold (“to do ill”) but he keeps specifics vague, providing just enough to intrigue and reassure his audience: “of this be sure” something *will* happen. Milton’s narrator has already briefly told us that Satan is responsible for the Fall, but the way Satan talks to Beelzebub makes discovering the finer points of his plan an intriguing (and even exciting) prospect. It becomes clear that Satan has hooked *his* audience, just as Milton has hooked the reader by establishing Satan as a determined and powerful speaker. As we read more of his speeches “we feel the element of bravado in the language [which] is meant to affect us” just as it does the rebel angels (Martz, 78). The way Satan rouses Beelzebub and the rest of the angels to action make him appear as a grand, heroic figure and the effect of his rhetoric is undeniably impressive. Satan rounds off one of the speeches that he makes later in Book I, with a *tricolon* that he emphasises through *alliteration*: “**A**wake, **a**rise, or be **f**orever **f**allen”: it is a call to action and an ultimatum that is instantaneously met by a resounding cheer from every angel, all of whom take flight in response (I:330). It is a terrifying and impressive scene that Milton conjures up here; even though the rebels can still feel “the evil plight / In which they were”, with the flames of hell roasting them where they stand, they do in fact “arise” and “awake” “to their general’s voice [...] Innumerable” (I:334-338).

Satan’s influence is powerful and rings throughout the early books of *Paradise Lost*; this analysis shows only a small portion of the ways in which his rhetoric appears so highly effective but demonstrates how, even in just a short space of time, he becomes integral to the poem’s influence. After rousing his legions to action, Satan gathers his generals to engage in intense debate so that he might convince them of his plan to corrupt mankind. The impending demise of our “grand parents” keeps readers hooked and the back and forth

that develops between views of Heaven, Hell and Eden ensures our attention. Satan's audience in hell find that they are eager pursue his plans and, looking in from the outside, it is difficult for the reader to not be intrigued and want to find out more too.

### *Northern Lights: Narrative engagement*

Despite the similarity of these two characters, the way *Northern Lights* introduces its master *rheter*, Lord Asriel, differs slightly to *PL*'s introduction of Satan. Whereas the reader observes Satan after his initial rebellion, they see Asriel prior to plotting his own (Lenz/Scott, 87). Asriel eventually comes to lead a rebellion against The Authority (*HDM*'s God figure) and even establishes his own kingdom in another universe, like Satan's fortress of "Pandaemonium", where he holds command (I:756).

Before the reader sees a more complete description of Asriel on page thirteen of *NL*, the narrator uses *systrophe* to build-up his reputation. The reader is led to focus on Lyra's thoughts about Asriel and the mix of apprehension and excitement that she feels about his impending arrival at the college. The majority of events in this novel are told from the third person point of view and it is often zoomed into focus on Lyra's perspective of events. As Greenwell argues: "The choice to present Lyra's manner of participating in the visual in [these] scene[s], as the spectator, allows the reader to absorb most of the scene"; as such, her point of view influences how the reader responds to the descriptions and speeches (Greenwell, 101-102). Throughout *NL* it is not difficult to share in Lyra's feelings and they often guide the reader to engage more personally in the story. For instance, the following is said when Lyra first considers Lord Asriel:

her uncle,<sup>[20]</sup> [was] a man whom she admired and feared greatly. He was said to be involved in high politics, in secret exploration, in distant warfare, and she never knew when he was going to appear. He was fierce: if he caught her in here [the Retiring Room] she'd be severely punished (*NL*, 6).

The things that excite and terrify Lyra about Asriel, such as his supposed engagement in “secret exploration” and “distant warfare”, are implicitly mysterious and they indicate that Asriel is a man of action; the words “exploration” and “warfare” emphasise this point. Asriel is someone who garners his knowledge from first-hand experiences of the world and he represents “the self-making man [because] he seeks to control his environment” (Gruner, 285). His characteristics are also made more effective through the way in which he contrasts with the “stooped languid Scholars” – Lenz observes that Asriel appears as a “romantically daring” individual in contrast – he is wilder, more rugged and certainly more dangerous than anyone else we see around him (*NL*, 13, Hunt/Lenz, 153).

When Asriel arrives at Jordan College, we learn it is his intention to speak to the Scholars and that he plans to present his findings garnered from a recent expedition. The description featured the page over demonstrates a part of the narrator's efforts to present Asriel's *ethos* appeal. It works to ensure that, even before he speaks, the reader is made aware of the authority that Asriel possesses. Before being given this description of Asriel, though, the reader is made aware of his daemon, which is in the form of “a snow leopard” (*NL*, 11). In the universe in which this story takes place, every individual has a daemon, which is the physical incarnation of a person's consciousness in animal form. As a child, a person's daemon can change shape (as is the case with Lyra), however as they approach adulthood their daemon settles and becomes fixed. Through this, as Hunt suggests:

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<sup>20</sup> Later, Lyra discovers Asriel is in fact her father.

“Pullman artfully conveys the fluidity of the child’s nature versus the rigidity of the adult’s, and at the same time communicates to the reader an immediate impression of a character’s essence” (Hunt/Lenz, 139). As such, daemons become a subtly complex device that allows the reader to access information about a character very quickly, similar to how an *epitheton* functions to define characteristics of Satan as the “infernal serpent”. Later on in *NL*, Pullman draws more attention to this point when Lyra meets a sailor who tells her about the way in which a daemon’s final form shows ““what kind of person you are [...] that’s worth knowing, that is’” (*NL*, 167). As a snow leopard is a rare and powerful animal, Asriel is identified in a similar fashion. With such a powerful creature at his side, it is no wonder Lyra is described as being “reminded, as she always was when she saw him again, of how much he frightened her” (*NL*, 11). A few pages later, Pullman provides a detailed description to qualify any implied characteristics about the man:

[Lyra] saw him fully, and marvelled [...] Lord Asriel was a tall man with powerful shoulders, a fierce dark face, and eyes that seemed to flash and glitter with savage laughter. It was a face to be dominated by, or to fight: never a face to patronize or pity. All his movements were large and perfectly balanced, like those of a wild animal, and when he appeared in a room like this, he seemed a wild animal held in a cage too small for it (*NL*, 13).

This description is *prosopographia* in action: an especially vivid description of a person. It can also be seen as a *panegyric* speech, particularly as the narrator appears to discuss how Lyra reveres rather than despises Asriel, in this instance. This description establishes him as being a powerful, dominating figure and so the *ethos* of his character comes across clearly in much the same way as when Satan is introduced: he is a figure to pay attention to. The description features plenty of *amplificatio* through the use of adjectives that describe Asriel’s physical presence: he possesses a “fierce dark face” and “eyes that seemed to flash and

glitter with savage laughter". While these two examples contrast one another, presenting 'hard' and 'soft' characteristics, they work in conjunction to make Asriel appear a more complex character. Possessing a "fierce dark face" makes him overtly intimidating to look at, but by focusing on the "savage laughter" glittering in his eyes, the audience is led to wonder about the way this man thinks; his entire persona, physical and mental, comes across as impressive and intriguing. The climactic *simile* is particularly potent because it is here that Pullman makes the reader aware, again, of Asriel's similarity to his daemon; "he is a dark, predatory figure" and in essence he *is* a wild animal (he even yawns "like a lion") and so this *simile*, about being like a caged animal, makes him appear all the more dangerous and dramatic (C. Butler, 134, *NL*, 11).

The effect of Asriel's presence is further demonstrated implicitly a little while after his physical description is given. This occurs when the Master gasps to see Asriel in the Retiring Room. His shocked response is due to the fact that the Master has just attempted to murder Asriel with poisoned wine. Had it not been for Lyra stepping out from hiding to stop Asriel, the murder would have succeeded.<sup>21</sup> Seeing that Asriel lives causes the Master to react: Lyra "heard an intake of breath as the first man came in", "'Lord Asriel,' said the Master heavily" (*NL*, 17, 18). While his reaction can be attributed to the fact that his murder plot has failed, it also reinforces the notion that Asriel's physical presence can make an impact on those who see him, just as readers have already seen when "Lyra marvelled" at him. After all, he evokes a physical reaction of heaviness in the Master and at the conclusion of chapter one, Lyra is described as feeling the force of Asriel's glance "almost as if it had

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<sup>21</sup> As the Retiring Room is a place she is not meant to be, when servants unexpectedly come into prepare the room, Lyra has to hide. From where she hides, Lyra witnesses the Master poison some wine prior to Asriel's arrival.



physical form, as if it were an arrow or a spear”; his intensity is so great, it is almost palpable (NL, 16-17).

One can assume that the Master made the murder attempt because he was not confident about winning an argument against Asriel, thus the surprise of seeing his plot fail suggests a lack of confidence in his own rhetorical abilities. This point is particularly useful when considering the way in which Asriel contrasts with the Master, who is his primary rhetorical opponent in this scenario. We are told Lyra observes that the Master “had been a powerful man, but he was well over seventy now, and his movements were stiff and slow” (NL, 6). Also significant is the form of his daemon, “a raven” (NL, 6). His association with the raven marks him as a clever and serious individual, still worthy of respect (particularly when contrasted against the typical dog daemons of the servants, who are loyal and obedient but only really react when ordered by their superiors). The raven, however, pales in comparison to Asriel’s snow leopard who is “alert and elegant and dangerous” (NL, 16). While still a figure to respect and revere (also shown by the title, ‘Master’), there is not nearly as much said about him as there is about Asriel and the descriptions about him do not make the Master appear as dominating figure. That said, the Master’s attempt on Asriel’s life shows that he is still a dangerous man, albeit in a more subtle way. As we see, the Master commands his servants with a polite authority, using a “deep voice”, and in numerous exchanges he makes use of *rhetorical questions*, politely asking, but never actually being questioned in response: “Show him straight into the Hall, will you?”, “[Y]ou’ve decanted some of the special Tokay for him?” (NL, 5). While both men employ effective methods to achieve their desired outcomes, Asriel’s authority comes across as more transparent and even when he is questioned, he provides an instant retort to deny any challenge:

“Wren...don’t question me; just do as you’re told” (NL, 12). Considering that Asriel is only a guest of the college, it is rather remarkable that he holds such authority; one would assume the Master would dominate. However, Asriel’s rhetorical skills ensure this is never an issue and he is sure to be “courteous to the Master in the Master’s own territory”, but even then, as discussion begins, “it was clear where the power lay” (NL, 18).

### Lord Asriel’s influence

When Asriel speaks to the Master and Scholars at the conclusion of chapter one, leading up to his speech, he immediately places himself in the seat of power: ““Master,”” said Lord Asriel. ‘Yes, I’m back. Do bring in your guests; I’ve got something very interesting to show you”” (NL, 17). Asriel skilfully plays on the Master’s hesitation following his shocked “intake of breath” and arrogantly answers an unasked question in order to undermine the Master’s authority. It is evident that Asriel is not a man to be easily controlled and in the few short sentences quoted previously, the observers (Lyra, the Scholars and the reader) can see that the supposed hierarchy of the College has been disrupted. It is a neat little speech in itself and rapidly sets up the three rhetorical appeals of an argument I have discussed earlier, emphasised by Aristotle: *ethos*, *logos* and *pathos*. Beginning with *ethos*, Asriel engages his audience’s attention: the act of speaking first grants him that power and by addressing the Master directly, Asriel enhances his control over the room by opposing the other figure of authority. He goes on to mix the *logos* and *pathos* appeals together, justifying the reasons why they should pay attention to him and so engaging their curiosity at the same time: “Do bring in your guests, I’ve got something very interesting to show you”. The three appeals are delivered in quick succession and as this is made at the conclusion of chapter one, it rounds

off the chapter as a compelling invitation to read on. The act of turning the page is like stepping through the entrance to the Retiring Room and allows the audience a moment to absorb the impact of Asriel's words.

At this stage, even before his main speech has begun, Asriel has obtained the attention he needs whilst also successfully displacing much of his competition's authority. However, Asriel, in much the same way as the Master, knows that he must become verbally eloquent in this manner rather than physically forceful. This is something Keith comments on in his discussion of rhetoric: "if you can't force people to do things, your best hope is to show them that...something is reasonable to do or believe" (Keith, 35). As such, Asriel continues on following the expected *decorum* of the college, although it is something he has clear disdain for and he does not always abide by it, as he says to Stelmara, his daemon, "There's probably some ancient etiquette that allows them to fine me a dozen bottles [of wine] for coming in here dressed improperly" (*NL*, 12). For the most part Asriel knows to play along with the expected etiquette, but he succeeds in establishing his own authority through sly subversion of it too. For example, "Guests entered the Retiring Room at the Master's invitation only, Lord Asriel knew that": by entering early, this shows Asriel as being intentionally impertinent; it is further evidence of his confident persona and powerful influence that he can take such action without consequence (*NL*, 11). What follows is his polite (yet insincere) apology for disregarding the expected rules:

'Master,' said Lord Asriel. 'I came too late to disturb your dinner, so I made myself at home in here. Hello, Sub-Rector. Glad to see you looking so well. Excuse my rough appearance; I've only just landed. Yes, Master, the Tokay's gone...The Porter knocked it off the table, but it was my fault. (*NL*, 18).

Here, Asriel makes a series of statements in which he never firmly apologises for behaviour that for anyone else would surely be discourteous; Asriel also ensures that the opinions he expressed to his daemon remain unknown to his audience. One can draw parallels to the same way in which Satan avoids taking blame for the Fall from heaven, and here Asriel employs *apoplanesis*, quickly moving away from a topic, first acknowledging it to be polite, but not dwelling on the matter so as to allow someone the opportunity to question and then undermine his authority. This is made markedly easier by the shock of the Master who failed to condemn Asriel for breaking with Jordan tradition. If the Master will not chastise his guest, then why should the Scholars interject? This allows Asriel to move on and further his *ethos*.

Even Asriel's placement in the room is used to affect his audience: "The Scholars greeted the visitor and moved into the room", this implies that Asriel is close to the entrance of the Retiring Room, giving those entering little chance of avoiding him (*NL*, 18). Here, Asriel employs the *comprobatio* technique and he compliments his "audience in the hopes they will look more kindly on [his] case" (Leith, 267). Readers see evidence of this working when he flatters the Chaplain: "Hello, Chaplain. I read your latest paper with great interest" (*NL*, 18). We later hear from the Librarian that: Asriel's "already got the Chaplain on his side" (*NL*, 24). While I do not mean to say that flattery alone wins over the audience in this instance, it can certainly be used as part of the overall approach taken toward achieving one's desired goal. Over the course of a couple of pages, Pullman shows off the power that Asriel possesses, and makes us aware of how speakers, like Asriel, can "adapt themselves to occasions in order to gain or maintain [their] position" and it becomes clear

that both the physical and the verbal actions that Asriel takes have a significant impact on his audience (Bender, 207).

When it comes to Asriel's main speech, it is important to remember that there are two opposing forces that make up what is effectively an argument, even if it is masked with a sense of *decorum*. The Master is against Asriel, so it is necessary to view their speeches alongside one another. The Master has far less time to speak than Asriel, he and the Scholars have gathered to listen to the visitor after all, but that does not mean that the Master's *kairos* (timing) is out of place. On the contrary, he uses what little time he has to make an impact of his own. He employs all six parts that make up a speech and uses a variety of rhetorical devices. The six parts of speech come from *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, which has been considered "one of the most important documents in the history of rhetoric" since the time of the Roman orator Cicero (Caplan, 10). This book discusses six key components of rhetorical speech including: *exordium*, *narration*, *division*, *proof*, *refutation* and *peroration*. I will explain the function of each during the analysis. Altogether, this speech is an attempt by the Master to lessen the impact of Asriel's impending speech and re-establish his own authority. The Master's speech follows:

'Gentlemen,' he said. 'I feel sure I speak for all of us when I bid Lord Asriel welcome. His visits are rare but always immensely valuable, and I understand he has something of particular interest to show us tonight. This is a time of high political tension, as we are all aware; Lord Asriel's presence is required early tomorrow morning in White Hall, and a train is waiting with steam up ready to carry him to London as soon as we have finished our conversation here; so we must use our time wisely. When he has finished speaking to us, I

imagine there will be some questions. Please keep them brief and to the point. Lord Asriel, would you like to begin?' (NL, 19-20).

It is worth noting that, despite the competition evident between these two men, this is a *panegyric* speech. As mentioned earlier, those involved in this scenario understand that they must abide by a sense of *decorum*, which is precisely the reason why they find themselves needing to employ strong rhetorical speeches that appear complimentary, but which subtly vie for control over the audience. The Master makes use of inclusive pronouns to suggest he and the Scholars are united, this is his *exordium* (an introduction to establish one's authority) and part of the *ethos* appeal of his argument. He attempts to get the audience on his side by presenting them as being united but also indicates that he is very much the figurehead here. This is achieved through the repetition of the personal pronoun "I", used in quick succession for added emphasis ("I feel I speak for us all") and the use of eight inclusive pronouns ("us", "we", "our") in order to reinforce a sense unity, but the aforementioned "I" indicates that the Master is in charge of what the Scholars are all supposedly thinking. His *narration* clarifies information they all know by using *anamnesis*, saying that they are of one mind because they all know why they are here today. The Master goes on from this to flatter Asriel by saying that his visits are "always immensely valuable". This is further evidence of this being a *panegyric* speech. One might also view it as *enargia*, which provides pomp to Asriel's already lofty persona but also shows the Master's respect for his guest. In announcing Asriel's brevity of time however, which is the *division* part of speech (pointing out the positives and negatives of the situation) the Master implies that they must be quick, rushed even. This undermines the time that Asriel has to deliver his argument and acts as a challenge. By labelling the meeting as a "conversation"

rather than a debate, the Master continues subtly to undermine and lessen the seriousness of the topics that are about to be discussed. This is where *proof* comes in; the fact that a train is already waiting for Asriel reinforces the need for urgency, as does the notion that “these are times of high political tension”: the suggestion is that there are far more serious things to consider than Asriel’s proposal and that, as he is busy with other things, why waste time here? The Master reinforces this point with an appeal to the Scholars to “use our time wisely” and to “please keep them [questions] brief and to the point”, which is the combination of both *refutation* and *peroration*. The former attacks an opponent’s argument (here it can be seen as belittlement by subtly suggesting that listening to Asriel is not a wise use of their time) and *peroration* is the Master summing up his argument by asking questions be kept brief. The Master will not allow Asriel the time to explain himself if he can help it and so he subtly encourages the Scholars to agree. The Master’s speech is impressive in itself despite how short it is, and this is surprising due to the earlier shock he suffered having failed in his murder attempt. The eloquence of his speech demonstrates his ability as an orator, but as Asriel begins his own speech in reply, it becomes clear who really holds the power.

Remaining as courteous as ever, Asriel thanks the Master for his introduction and then proceeds to make further instructions of his audience. “‘Thank you, Master,’ said Lord Asriel. ‘To start, I have a few slides to show you. Sub-Rector, you can see best from here, I think. Perhaps the Master would like to take the chair by the wardrobe?’” (NL, 20). As Lyra saved Asriel from the poisoned wine, he makes use of her by having her spy on the Master for him, hence his request (though more of an indirect command) that the Master move to the wardrobe, where Lyra is hiding. This invites more intrigue as Lyra has a great view of the

Master and so can provide the reader with more insight into his reactions when the speech gets underway. This helps to reveal more about the effect of Asriel's speech because we get to observe how it affects those to whom he is addressing. This pays off when Lyra hears the Master murmur to the Librarian: "The devil! He *knew* about the wine, I'm sure of it", the Master goes on to show his resolve to "argue against [Asriel], with all the eloquence we have" and so we see, despite the confidence of his speech, that he is still very nervous (NL, 20).

The reader quickly sees the Master is right to be nervous as Asriel holds nothing back in his own speech. Having already flattered members of his audience and surrounded himself in an alluring air of authority and intrigue, Asriel is well placed to compel the audience in his favour. Asriel's introduction to his main speech follows:

As some of you know, I set out for the North twelve months ago on a diplomatic mission to the King of Lapland. At least, that's what I pretended to be doing. In fact my real aim was to go further north still, right on to the ice, to try and discover what had happened to the Grumman expedition. One of Grumman's last messages to the Academy of Berlin spoke of a certain natural phenomenon only seen in the lands of the North. I was determined to investigate that as well as find out what I could about Grumman. But the first picture I'm going to show you isn't directly about either of those things. (NL, 20-21).

In his *exordium*, Asriel makes use of *anamnesis*; those who knew about his supposed reasons for travelling are made to feel as though they were privy to special information and this has a positive effect on how they respond to Asriel as the speaker; it makes them feel important. Although revealing that he lied, his deception is met with intrigue rather than anger (after all, he would not be speaking to the Scholars now if he wanted to keep his



findings secret), so rather than become angry, the Scholars listen, keen to know what Asriel was really up to. He quickly moves past the fact he lied (*apoplanesis* again) to begin his main *narration*, where he provides a brief explanation as to what he was really doing: “In fact my real aim was to go further north still”. Asriel keeps his audience on tenterhooks by addressing a different topic, though he subtly promises to address these other points later, which ensures he keeps their attention. The hints made by the narrator earlier on, regarding Asriel’s mysterious activities (of exploration, politics and warfare), are now being clarified (to a degree) and so the reader, Lyra and the Scholars all want to see what Asriel has to show and how it ties in with the rumours they have heard about him. Asriel goes on to provide the *proof* segment of his argument, which advances his *ethos*. The reveal of physical *proof* in the form of two photograms (projections) reveals the most intriguing points of Asriel’s discussion: his interest in Dust. For Lyra and the reader, Dust means very little at this stage, though: “something in the way he said it made Lyra imagine *Dust* with a capital letter, as if this wasn’t ordinary dust” (NL, 22). The Scholar’s reaction justifies Lyra’s reaction: “a sudden collective silence, followed by gasps of incredulity” and this highlights Dust’s significance to the reader, making them aware of a key element in the story (NL, 22).

‘It’s Dust,’ Lord Asriel repeated. ‘It registered as light on the plate because particles of Dust affect this emulsion as photos affects silver nitrate emulsion. It was partly to test it that my expedition went North in the first place. As you see, the figure of the man is perfectly visible. Now I’d like you to look at the shape to his left...that shape you can see is a child.’ (NL, 22)

This leads one Scholar to suggest that the child is “A severed child” (NL, 22). This is a point planted by Pullman to intrigue the audience and which has a substantial pay-off later in the novel. It ties into intercision (briefly mentioned in Chapter One of this thesis) but Asriel’s

reaction to this statement is an example of *refutation*, of sorts, with the use of *apodioxis*: “the indignant rejection of an opponent’s argument [or comment] as so absurd that it was an impertinence to introduce it” (Leith, 264). Following a rather “intense silence,” Lord Asriel says, “calmly, ‘An entire child. Which, given the nature of Dust, is precisely the point, is it not?’” (NL, 22) One might imagine a look of disdain on Asriel’s face as he says this, which implies he is making use of *mycterismus*: “belittlement and sneering” and considering what we know about Asriel, it comes as no surprise that his reaction creates a great deal of tension in the room. Although this part of scene is rather short, it comes across as intensely interesting, but Asriel’s *refutation* to the Scholar could be seen as passing over to the audience—we want to ask questions too, but the anxiety that comes forward from this question implies we may learn something troubling, so is best to be left alone, for now. As such, Pullman has his characters move past this scene in order to pursue the topic of Dust a little further (*apoplanesis*, again). Dust is the most intriguing element of *HDM*, with its true significance being elusive for much of the trilogy and at this point in the book, we do not yet know how it is significant. Furthermore, because it is something that Asriel is intensely curious about, Lyra and the reader become intrigued by it as well. As we have seen in earlier examples, Lyra’s insight influences the reader’s own.

Asriel’s speech enhances what initially started out as a simple story and reveals greater depth and mystery than first impressions indicated when readers saw Lyra exploring the Retiring Room. Another point that builds on the significance of the story comes when one Scholar asks if what Asriel is talking about has anything to do with the northern lights, also known as the aurora (NL, 23). As the title of the first book in the trilogy, the name is already something of a curiosity for the reader, who may be wondering about its

significance. The same thing can be said of *TSK* and *TAS*. When Asriel reveals that the northern lights may actually be a pathway to a city in another dimension, effected by Dust, some of the Scholars have a hard time believing it: “‘A city in another world, no doubt?’ said the Dean, with contempt in his voice” (*NL*, 24). However, the establishment of Asriel as a powerful, intelligent and authoritative figure suggests that what he is showing them could actually be true.

Asriel’s *peroration* of his argument occurs when he reveals the severed head of Grumman, the man whose expedition he went north to find. At this point the Scholar’s become a “jumble of voices” and utter “murmurs of excitement” and Asriel is described as “watching the Scholars with a glitter of sardonic amusement, and saying nothing” (*NL*, 27). Lyra observes Asriel inveigling the Scholars, though of course none of them know yet that he is being deceitful, including Lyra. The head of Grumman is, in fact, a fake, but this is not something readers are made aware of until later on in the trilogy when they discover that Grumman is actually alive. One could say that Asriel’s deceit is not entirely necessary here, as it appears as though he has already won over most of the Scholars, but presenting the head provides the shock appeal, and guarantees their interest and support. At this point, Asriel’s expression of “sardonic amusement” says it all; his combination of truth and tricks wins round the Scholars who decide to provide him with the funds “to fit out another expedition” (*NL*, 28). Having achieved his aim it comes as no surprise that Lyra, and so too the reader, desire to explore more of what might happen next in the story. Although much of what has been said is puzzling to both Lyra and the reader, the potential to find answers and their desire to know more is strong.

In this section, through a combination of sagacious narration and carefully crafted speeches, Pullman establishes a great deal of intrigue through the figure of Asriel that works to instil in his readers the desire “to hear more about...the Northern Lights and that mysterious Dust” (*NL*, 28). As a result, their search for answers begins here and continues throughout the rest of *HDM*.

### Chapter Conclusion

In seeing the figures of authority – Satan and Asriel – intrigue their audiences so masterfully, the reader inevitably become intrigued too, as a result, they find themselves eager to discover answers to the tempting questions being posed within each myth. This was my reason for closely analysing the early speeches as opposed to studying the characters of Lyra and Eve at this stage, as the narrators’ build-ups of Asriel and Satan, as well as the speeches they provide, are the best examples of how the authors engage their reader’s attention. The language that the authors use and the structures they build simply provide the groundwork on which the reader can extend their own thinking. The rhetoric of the narration and the speeches opens up how the reader engages with the text, enhanced through figures who join the reader in observing what goes on. So far, we may find ourselves agreeing with Toye’s analysis of rhetoric, where he argues it “should be seen as an important tool of strategy”; it is evident that these speeches are designed to influence those who witness them (Toye, 86). But it is also a tool “with inconsistent and unpredictable results” as it is difficult to predict how these stories will unfold as a result of their influence, but that is part of what makes them so intensely interesting (Toye, 86).

Chapter Three goes on to consider how the characters of Lyra and Eve (and so too the reader) respond to this intrigue, as well as how they can be seen to develop as a result of Satan and Asriel's rhetoric. Lyra's talent for lying and spinning tales leads her away from her initial point of innocence to one of experience as she goes through her journey. The way in which Satan manipulates Eve affects her reasoning and how she perceives the world after she Falls.

## Chapter Three - From Innocence to Wisdom

Eve and Lyra are the characters most affected by Satan and Asriel's rhetoric. While Eve does not witness Satan's early speech in the same way that Lyra observes Asriel's, she later becomes directly enthralled by the plans Satan lays out at the start of *Paradise Lost*. Due to the influence placed upon these characters by a master *rhetor*, it becomes interesting to consider how this may have affected their development by the latter stages of each myth. The scenario between Eve and Satan (analysed in this chapter) takes place in Book IX of *PL* and is *the* important event that Milton builds toward throughout the first eight books of his poem. Lyra's final meeting with Lord Asriel, at the end of *Northern Lights*, is built up in much the same way; their reunion is important because reaching Asriel has driven many of Lyra's motivations throughout her journey.

However, a problematic question unfolds when we consider the decisions that Eve and Lyra begin to make in the latter stages of each myth: are they decisions these characters make for themselves, or are they manipulated into making them? Rhetoric can be dangerous and ever since early practice in Athenian society, there were worries that "falsehood would prevail over truth [and] that highly trained speakers [could] defeat truthful opponents who were not as persuasive" (Keith, 6). As such, when an individual is led to make a decision that they later perceive to be a mistake, how much can they really be blamed for their actions? Eve and Lyra are each shown as using their ability to reason in an attempt to do good; for instance, in Book IX, Eve reasons with Adam that by separating for the day they can achieve more work and so better glorify God. Likewise, Lyra makes her decisions with the good intention of saving her friend, Roger. However, these same acts of

reasoning, when manipulated by another party, can also cause great tragedy, be it humanity's Fall in *PL* or an unexpected betrayal in *NL*.

Both Eve and Lyra, on a simple level, desire to satisfy their curiosity for knowledge. As a newly created being, Eve has to learn through trial and error and so is reliant on her ability to reason in order to make her decisions. This is not something she frets over though, as Adam reassures her, "God left free the will, for what obeys / Reason, is free, and reason he made right"; this suggests that they will do no wrong as long as they make decisions after careful thought (IX:351-2). The idea of challenging their creator does not occur until Satan plants it there. As Fredson Bowers states, prior to Satan's influence, Adam and Eve can be considered as "pure" and they have "no latent evil living within"; therefore, the evil that later afflicts them "comes from the outside", which suggests they cannot be entirely at fault for their actions (Bowers, 268). However, more controversially, one could say that Adam and Eve are biased in their opinion of God because he and his angels have provided them with their point of view. As such, when an alternative presents itself to Eve, she continues to act in the way she always has, inquisitively, and she attempts to qualify Satan's claims just as she would in any other situation. This raises concerns about the morality of the Fall in *PL*, as Stephen Orgel argues: "Who knew [what would happen]—how could one know? [...] How do you know anything except by trial, by experience?" (*PL*, xvii). This was certainly a question that was prevalent during the seventeenth century in which *PL* was written. Challenging the theology of Christianity was not uncommon during the Enlightenment and, as a result, Christianity fragmented into numerous denominations; in this way, posing such theological questions through the poem was thematically relevant and a part of what led readers to consider its messages more personally (Law, 18).

It is clear that Lyra, like Eve, has not had a solid base from which to gain knowledge either, as the Master tells her: “We have taught you some things here [at Jordan], but not well or systematically” (*NL*, 70). As a result, Lyra must rely on her own sketchy knowledge and intuition throughout her journey, and she does not always know enough to make the right decisions because of this. For example, Lyra believes she is doing the right thing by bringing Asriel the alethiometer, a device she thinks he needs for his experiments, but her actions turn out to have disastrous consequences because she lacks understanding of his true intentions (though I will elaborate on the significance of this and the alethiometer later on). Lyra appears actively encouraged throughout the story to make mistakes; even her grand destiny is one she must fulfil without knowing what she is doing, as the Master of Jordan points out: “Lyra has a part to play in all this, and a major one. The irony is that she must do it all without realizing what she’s doing” (*NL*, 32). The implication is that she must be free to make her own mistakes and that any control of her free willed actions could have disastrous consequences.

Despite the terrible results of some of their actions, the act of Falling can still be seen as a good thing. To Fall provides an alternative point of view from which all of these characters better understand many things: it enables them to see and experience them by their contraries, such as success and failure.<sup>22</sup> Debating the morality of these character’s decisions is not really the point of this chapter, but it is, in part, demonstrative of the point I wish to discuss overall. The way in which these stories are built influences how the reader thinks and, as a result of being challenged to think in different ways, they are guided towards considering complex questions. As such, it is important to understand *why* these

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<sup>22</sup> We see this early on in *PL* when Satan talks about his discovery that God truly is superior after all: “so much the stronger proved / He with his thunder: and till then who knew / The force of those dire arms?” (I:92-94).



characters come to make the choices they do by looking at *how* they are influenced and then think about what the impact of this might be on the reader.

Just as in the previous chapter, the analysis here will consider the impact of the narrative build up in *PL* and how it works to enhance the audience's engagement with the speeches that follow. This furthers my discussion of joint spectatorship, mentioned in Chapter Two, where readers continue to engage with the observers in these myths (the narrator and Lyra, but now also Eve) "as if they were real people"; these relationships are "one important reason why we respond so affectionately to fictional narratives" and become so invested in their stories and in their messages (Herman, 210).

### *Paradise Lost: Eve's temptation*

In the opening of Book IX, Milton's narrator explicitly states that the tone of the poem is about to change. In this section, the narrator's *ethos* appeal is enhanced by his *pathos* and his introduction is constructed to have a powerful effect on the audience's emotions. The sorrowful tone presents a very human response to the events being described and so keeps the narrator relatable; he is sad, as anyone would be to such an impending disaster, but the fact he continues makes him appear stoic and so more authoritative:

No more of talk where God or angel guest  
With man, as with his friend, familiar used  
To sit indulgent, and with him partake  
Rural repast, permitting him the while  
Venial discourse unblamed: I now must change

Those notes to tragic; foul mistrust, and breach  
Disloyal on the part of man, revolt: (IX:1-7).

The opening is blunt and direct with “no more” putting a definitive stop to the more joyful “notes” seen in the previous four books, in which Adam and the angel Raphael enjoyed conversing with one another. This abrupt change is meant to shock the reader and immediately engage their attention; “I now must change” paints the discussion as being an urgent necessity, despite it being a “tragic” and terrible thing to talk about. The phrase “tragic; foul mistrust” and words like “disloyal” and “revolt” go further to emphasise the negativity meant to be felt here as they stand in contrast to the “indulgent” “rural repast” that mankind previously enjoyed. The use of *alliteration* in this opening further emphasises this point and is a subversion of its previous use; where it once projected positivity (“favoured of heaven so highly”) it now enforces sorrow:

. . . . disobedience: on the part of heaven  
Now alienated, distance and distaste,  
Anger and just rebuke, and judgement given,  
That brought into this world a world of woe,  
Sin and her shadow Death, and Misery (IX:7-12).

These alliterative words relate to one another in more than just the way they sound: “**G**od” and “**g**uest”, “**f**riend” and “**f**amiliar”, “**p**artake / rural **r**epast, **p**ermitting”, “**d**isobedi**e**nce...**d**istance and **d**istaste” and “**w**orld a **w**orld of **w**oe”, but also in how they become significant when grouped together (IX:1-11). In this context, “guest”, means “to meet”, and “God” meeting with man was meant to be a wondrous thing; they were once “friends” and “familiar” with one another. However, as the theme has now become about

separation (emphasised in lines 8-9 with “disobedience...now alienation, distance and distaste”), it becomes clear that *alliteration* is used to highlight the “woe” bound up in these words. “Disobedience”, “distance and distaste” is also a neat summary of the Fall in itself (and an example of *isocolon*, which is a series of similarly structured elements of similar/same length in a sentence) and each of these words defines a key moment relating to the Fall. “Disobedience” is man betraying God’s command, “Distance” is God sending man from Eden and “Distaste” is a sign of God’s displeasure. The power of Milton’s written word always seems amplified when spoken. Leah Marcus suggests that perhaps the oral dictation of his epic (due to his blindness) influenced this. She also notes that “almost everything he wrote down [...] he envisioned more voiced than written” and that Milton was conscious of the effect of oration and so he sought to weave its effects into his written works (Marcus, 212). As such, this particularly scathing summation becomes more powerful when heard aloud, due to the sibilant nature of the words through the repetition of “dis”. The effect of manipulating *alliteration* for melancholy rather than joyful expression is subtle, but it works to drive home sensations of loss, pain and sorrow, and acts as one of the first instances to describe the paradise soon to be lost. The final two lines of this introduction are also significant as they are adapted from the introduction to Book I: “Whose mortal taste / Brought death into the world, and all our woe” (I:2-3). This invites both the sense of apprehension that was felt in the opening of the poem and the tragic emotions being elicited in the present and works to align humankind’s impending betrayal with Satan’s rebellion. In this way, Milton brings full-circle the key subject matter of his poem to heighten the reader’s emotional investment in the drama that is about to unfold.

Having established the sorrowful tone of Book IX, the narrator goes on to build tension as he tells the reader of the slow but sure approach of Satan, who “bent / On man’s destruction... / ... fearless returned” to Eden (*PL*, IX:53-57). The narrative suspense continues as Adam later expresses his fears for both his and Eve’s safety:

Much doubt possesses me, for thou know’st  
What hath been warned us, what malicious foe  
Envyng our happiness . . . . .  
. . . . . seeks to work us woe and shame  
By sly assault (IX:251-6).

Despite Adam’s reservations, Eve persists in her attempt to “Let us divide our labours, thou where choice / Leads thee” (IX:214-15). She assures her husband she will not be affected by Satan if they cross paths, but his impending arrival (as well as the reader’s knowledge of what he is capable of) makes this a tense scene to observe because we know she ultimately succumbs to Satan’s plot. In this instance though, one must be aware that in her conversation with Adam, Eve is actively making good use of her ability to reason in order to argue. She proves to be a determined, motivated individual in her own right, which Adam praises: “Well hast thou motioned, well thy thoughts employed” (IX:229-230). His praise is made in reference to his belief that “nothing lovelier can be found / In woman, than to study household good” and while this raises questions about gender roles, Eve comes across as a more developed, well-rounded character, in fact, “Milton’s early readers may have been surprised by the fullness and complexity of Eve’s character” (Greenblatt, 1830). In their conversation, Eve argues with a “sweet accent”, suggesting she is not swayed by any emotional bias and so is self-assured in what she says. She declares that she and Adam will

be living in perpetual fear if they do not trust one another and that “if this be our condition, thus to dwell / In narrow circuit [...] / How are we happy, still in fear of harm?”, and Adam eventually succumbs to this point (IX:321-326). It is interesting to consider the use of dialectic reason here and how it is we see Adam and Eve logically working toward making a reasonable decision. Neither of them is omniscient and they are not to know how far away Satan is, or when he will show up, only that he *might*; there is no guarantee either will be led astray. Both the narrator and the reader do have a near omniscient knowledge of this scenario though, which is what makes Eve’s decision both great (in the sense of seeing her express free-thought, as well as creating an air of tension) and tragic (because we know she is doomed):

O much deceived, much failing, hapless Eve,  
Of thy presumed return! event perverse!  
Thou never from that hour in Paradise  
Found’st either sweet repast, or sound repose;  
Such ambush hid among sweet flowers and shades  
Waited with hellish rancour imminent  
To intercept thy way, or send thee back  
Despoiled of innocence, of faith, of bliss. (IX:404-411).

The exclamatory phrases heighten the emotion the narrator and reader should be feeling at this time. Milton also highlights the futility of the situation by talking about this as a past event (“thou never from that hour found”); he is evidently heartbroken that he cannot change the outcome. After all, Eve cannot hear his lamentations, so this is intended to influence the reader, as if to say, “look at the mistake she has made!” The narration goes on

to contrast “sweet repast” and “sweet flowers” to “hellish rancour” and “despoiled...innocence”, which mixes positive and negative descriptions (a form of *antithesis*) to build up the collision that is on its way. The narration climaxes with use of *anaphora* (the repetition of a word or phrase, in this case, “of”, at the start of a clause or sentence) in a *tricolon* (a list of three): “Despoiled of innocence, of faith, of bliss”, to drive home that these three precious things are soon to be lost to mankind (a *pathos* appeal).

The *kairos* of Milton’s argument shows awareness of the moment when his own rhetoric will be most effective, which, in this case, follows eight books of establishing character, plot, and ensuring the emotional involvement of his audience. All of these converge to heighten the drama of Eve’s impending Fall. Satan’s interaction with Eve begins with him also making appropriate use of *kairos*, as early in Book IX the narrator states that Satan “wished his hap might find / Eve separate” and when, by chance, he does, he does not waste the well-timed opportunity. (IX:421-422). Spying Eve alone, Satan appears to her in the form of a beautiful snake: “pleasing was his shape, / And lovely, never since of serpent kind / Lovelier” (IX:500-505). Due to the innately subtle nature of the serpent, something Satan observes in Book IX lines 85-86, he reasons it can help him better win Eve over. The snake’s ability to be both beautiful but also cunningly deceptive add to the sense of doubling already established in this part of the poem to play on the reader’s mind (Morrison, 178).

Satan secures Eve’s attention by opening his mouth and speaking, an act not yet achieved by any animal, which catches Eve unawares. During this speech, Satan makes use of many rhetorical devices blended together to become utterly compelling:

Wonder not, sovereign mistress, if perhaps

Thou canst, who art sole wonder. . . . .

. . . . .

Fairest resemblance of thy maker fair,

Thee all things living gaze on, all things thine

By gift, and thy celestial beauty adore

With ravishment beheld, there best beheld

Where universally admired; but here

. . . . .

Beholders rude, and shallow to discern

Half what in thee is fair, one man except,

Who sees thee? (and what is one?) who shouldst be seen

A goddess among gods (IX:532-548).

This is a *panegyric* speech where Satan makes every effort to flatter Eve in order to win her favour. He begins by mixing *antanaclasis* and *auxesis*, to flatter Eve. *Antanaclasis* is where a word is repeated but its meaning changes, in this case “wonder” appears twice; in the first instance it is used as a verb, as part of an instruction where Satan asks Eve not to wonder too much about the surprise of hearing an animal speak. It shows an awareness of his audience that he understands she may be shocked, as indeed she is: “What may this mean? Language of man pronounced / By tongue of brute [...]?” (IX:553-554). He names her “sovereign mistress” (an *epitheton*), and builds from this by using lots of *comprobatio* to flatter Eve. Each statement adds to the increasing force of his rhetoric and amplifies his influence, which is *auxesis* in action. Satan blends in the second use of “wonder” (this time as a noun) to claim an animal speaking, rare and unusual as it is, still cannot compare to

Eve's own wonder. Satan lies about the reverence he feels toward Eve too, for he truly hates her,<sup>23</sup> and so he appears to abide by the expected *decorum* of nature, where humanity rules authoritative over beasts. Satan works to give Eve the impression that she is superior to him and that he is her servant and so this, along with much of the description in his opening speech, is use of *amplificatio*, where Satan embellishes his descriptions to appear praiseworthy to provoke Eve to respond. Furthermore, although both Adam and Eve share in the dominion of Earth, in this section Satan does not refer to Adam by anything other than "one man.../...what is one?", the *rhetorical question* undermines Adam's significance and further appeals to Eve's vanity. The use of *epithetons* takes this point further too. Satan is trying to elevate Eve's sense of self-worth by focusing solely on her and he backs up his appeal through *argumentum ad populum* (an appeal to the authority of the crowd), saying that "all living things gaze on" Eve and that she is "universally admired". Bowers comments that "naturally[, Eve] admires a thing that seems to answer her love and sympathy with love and sympathy" and so "she gladly enters into a higher relationship with this intellectual being whose authority [stems] from reason" (Bowers, 267). Satan wants Eve to feel peerless so that when he finally gets to making his point, suggesting that the tree of knowledge is being jealously withheld from Eve, she will legitimately begin to wonder why this is the case.

Eve has no reason to question the snake, something the narrator confirms just before Eve begins her internal debate about eating the fruit, saying: "...in her ears the sound / Yet rung of his persuasive words, impregn'd / With reason to her seeming, and with truth" (IX:736-738). On that point, everything Satan says at this stage is essentially true, albeit

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<sup>23</sup> He acknowledges her beauty, but then his jealousy toward her for it fuels his hate: "She fair, divinely fair, fit love for gods, / Not terrible, though terror be in love / And beauty... / Hate stronger, under show of love well feigned, / The way which to her ruin now I tend." (IX:489-493).



flowered with *pleonasm*s, but in telling her the truth to gain her trust he is leading her to believe his grand lie. The term for this is *pleonasmus*, where more words than necessary are used in a description. Satan could simply call Eve by her name and exclude many of the adjectives he uses in his description, but he retains them in order to flatter her more convincingly. He concludes his opening speech, saying Eve “shouldst be seen a goddess among gods”, which is use of a *simile*, to effectively round off this speech and engage her full attention.

Clearly succeeding in this task, Eve requests that he explain “this miracle, and say, / How cam’st thou speakable of mute” (IX:562-563). Although the reader knows she is being deceived, Eve’s *way* of reacting can be seen as positive as she is clearly attempting to use her reason in a situation she finds at odds with her experiences. Eve does not immediately refute what the snake is saying, nor does she ignore him, rather she attempts to make sense of the scenario set in front of her by calling on her own knowledge in conjunction with her observations. In this way, she exemplifies traits Milton wants his audience to take on for themselves. For example she *remembers* that God created animals “mute to all articulate sound”, though she says she has *seen* “in their looks, / Much reason, and in their actions oft [it] appears”, and so when she sees an animal speaking in front of her, she decides it is not an entirely implausible event and dubs it a “miracle”, suggesting she may even believe God is responsible (IX:557-559).

Having succeeded in gaining Eve’s attention, Satan begins to lie about how he gained the skill of speech, which is the *narration* of his argument. His lie runs for forty-three lines and in it Satan furthers his *pathos* appeal to Eve,<sup>24</sup> but he also attempts to present his

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<sup>24</sup> The full quote can be found in the Appendix.

argument as logically as he can so that Eve will more easily follow what he says. Here, he describes the fruit as a miraculous object, hoping that the more spectacular he makes it sound, the more likely Eve is to want it for herself: “fruit of the fairest colours mixed, / Ruddy gold... / from the boughs a savoury odour blown” (IX:578-579). The adjectives used in its description appeal to the senses and Satan’s claim that it caused a “strange alteration in me, to degree / Of reason in my inward powers, and speech”, which is supposed to be proven in his ability to have a conversation with Eve (IX:599-600). This makes his argument seem logical but also backed by *proof*. The *peroration* of his speech sees him exult in Eve’s beauty, where he names her “sovereign” again and “universal dame”, concluding with two grand *epithetons* (IX:612). This works to intrigue Eve so much so that she asks to go toward the tree, “Yet more amazed unwary [Eve] thus replied. / Serpent, thy overpraising leaves in doubt / The virtue of that fruit, in thee proved...Lead then” (IX:614-631). Satan’s use of *comprobatio* and *auxesis*, as well as the way in which he maintains the expected *decorum* leads Eve to believe she has the power over Satan to command him, but the irony is that she is doing what he desires instead.

Thus far, Eve has used her reason to make sense of Satan’s claims, but one cannot help but be impressed by how Satan manipulates her own reasoning against her. Eve spends thirty-five lines debating the virtues of Satan’s argument before she commits her fatal act. This turns out to be the longest speech (though is actually a soliloquy, made internally) during her interchange with Satan, which contrasts the length of his two longest speeches, with the first being forty-five lines long (IX:568-612) and the other being fifty-four (IX:679-732). By contrast, this makes Eve’s longest speech in their verbal exchanges only fourteen lines long (IX:553-566). Despite the authority Satan ascribes to Eve it is clear where the

power truly lies and that he has successfully manipulated her way of thinking. Eve's soliloquy becomes the key moment for Milton's audience and despite the tragedy ascribed to this scenario; it highlights the importance of an individual thinking about their own experiences and considering their beliefs before taking action. However, even with Satan manipulating her, Eve still demonstrates the qualities that Milton wants to exemplify through his poem, and she continues to actively reason and think logically for herself.

### Eve's deliberation

In Eve's final speech, before she Falls, the reader is made party to her private thoughts (stated on line 744: "thus to her self she mused") and this allows them to openly engage with her internal debate. This interaction is made especially potent through her use of *hypophora*, where she asks *rhetorical questions* and then answers them, but which also acts as a subtle prod to the reader to think of their own answers too. As we see shortly, it is as though Eve is making a speech meant to convince not only herself, but also the reader of her actions. After all, Milton wants his audience to consider a new way of thinking and so actively shows Eve adopting one herself. As such, readers can see themselves as being influenced by both Satan's and Eve's rhetoric and they become involved in a provocative debate of their own:

Pausing a while, thus to her self she mused.

Great are thy virtues, doubtless, best of fruits,

Though kept from man, and worthy to be admired;

Whose taste, too long forborne, at first assay

Gave elocution to the mute, and taught

The tongue not made for speech to speak thy praise (IX:743-749).

Eve is working out the *logos* of Satan's argument, and so goes through everything she has been told as logically as she can, weighing up his *proof* for herself. "Have the courage to make use of your own understanding" wrote Kant in his consideration of hermeneutics (the science/art of interpretation) in the Enlightenment period; Eve demonstrates this process as she believes she is working toward making a well-informed decision based on her own understanding of the situation (Gadamer, 284). She begins by addressing the physical nature of the fruit, acknowledging Satan's initial claims and praising it herself; as such, this takes on the connotations of a *panegyric* speech, with the apple being the object of her praise and the first sign that Satan's words were true. She further indicates she believes Satan's claims are true by referencing the effects of the apple in the past tense: "at first assay / **Gave** elocution to the mute": she clearly believes it has already worked to cause a change in something. She continues:

Thy praise he also, who forbids thy use,

Conceals not from us, naming thee the tree

Of knowledge, knowledge both of good and evil;

Forbids us then to taste, but his forbidding

Commends thee more, while it infers the good

By thee communicated, and our want:

For good unknown sure is not had; or, had

And yet unknown, is as not had at all.

In plain then, what forbids he but to know,

Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise? (IX:750-759).

Here, Eve reasons on what Adam told her and on what he was told by God, that they are “not to taste that only tree / Of knowledge, planted by the tree of life” (IV:423-424).

However, having named it the “tree / Of knowledge”, she reasons that this tree must be good, so if knowledge is man’s true desire, how can something named “the tree of knowledge” be bad? “Our want” is knowledge, she says, and she reasons that to leave something undiscovered and ignore her God-given desires “is as not had at all”: it is, in fact, wasted knowledge and so contrary to what she believes is good. This leads Eve to consider Satan’s string of *rhetorical questions* asked at the *peroration* of his speech, specifically concerning envy, “is it envy, and can envy dwell in heavenly breasts?” (IX: 729-730). In this instance, she comes dangerously close to claiming that God *is* holding her back and she blends three rhetorical devices together, which demonstrates the seriousness with which she contemplates her decision by using a *rhetorical question*, mixed with *anaphora* (the repetition of “forbids”) in a *tricolon*: “what forbids he but to know? Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise?” Although Eve does not provide a definitive answer here, the repetition of questions indicates she is working through potential answers and suggests that Eve thinks it is ridiculous that God would forbid goodness and wisdom when these are two things mankind have been told to embrace. The logical conclusion, therefore, must be that God *is* jealous, although she (and so Milton) never goes so far as to admit that outright. By not explicitly making this statement, we see evidence of Lenz’ analysis, that Milton “edges”

around the controversial “Fortunate Fall” concept, but the implication of Eve’s deliberation alone is enough to play on the reader’s mind (Lenz/Scott, 89). Therefore, Eve goes on:

..... In the day we eat  
  
Of this fair fruit, our doom is, we shall die.  
  
How dies the serpent? he hath eaten and lives,  
  
And knows, and speaks, and reasons, and discerns,  
  
Irrational till then. For us alone  
  
Was death invented? or to us denied  
  
This intellectual food, for beasts reserved?  
  
.....  
  
What fear I then? .....  
  
Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine,  
  
Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste,  
  
Of virtue to make wise: What hinders then  
  
To reach, and feed at once both body and mind? (IX: 762-779).

Her final assessment in the *climax* of this soliloquy focuses on the prospect of death, which is something Eve now believes will not affect her negatively, as God implied it would. Here, her sense of authority, instilled in her by Satan, takes hold, particularly when she says: “What fear I then?” She reasons that if the snake, a low beast, “hath eaten and lives”, then surely she, “Goddess humane”, will survive (IX:732). In the *peroration* of her soliloquy she

summarises the key points of Satan's argument to reassure herself of her impending actions. The final *rhetorical question* is painted as a statement of certainty rather than an expression of doubt: "What fear I then?" she asks herself: what can possibly go wrong? The closing statement is proof that taking action, rather than participating in further debate, is the only way for Eve to resolve any doubts she might have. Satan made the claim she could resolve any remaining doubts if she eats anyway, presenting it as being a logical, risk free solution: "these, these and many more / Causes import your need of this fair fruit" (IX:729-731).

So saying, her rash hand in evil hour  
Forth reaching to the fruit, she plucked, she ate.  
Earth felt the wound; and nature from her seat,  
Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe,  
That all was lost. (IX:780-784).

This entire scene guides the reader's own thoughts to consider how Eve makes her decision. In it, they see that she comes to rely on what she reasons to be true after carefully working her way through the facts presented to her. This scenario can be seen to undermine the importance of maintaining faith when one is making decisions and can be deemed controversial, if not heretical, in relation to religion. One way of looking at it is to say that Milton encourages the "rational interpretation" of the Biblical narrative by demonstrating "the free use of reason in an act of interpretation" and throughout the poem we see characters like Eve and Satan act in accordance with this (Patterson, 123). However, Rumrich suggests this sort of approach, (Milton claiming he would be justifying God's ways

to men), “may well appear as ironic bait”, and so Milton’s claims become quite troubling, particularly due to the “deeply inimical” nature of Milton’s contemporary audience regarding matters of theodicy (Rumrich, 253). While there may have been various denominations of the Christian faith in the Enlightenment who enacted their beliefs in different way, belief in God and his intentions was not a matter to question; yet Milton achieves a delicate balance in his poem, doing enough to provoke inquiry from his reader about these ideas, but not too much so as to provoke great hostility: the implications alone are enough (Rumrich, 253). *PL* is meant to be didactic, “at least in part”, and teach readers of humanity’s capacity to apply reason to their decisions and it does this by presenting challenging scenarios for reader’s to contemplate dialectically and learn from (Rumrich, 259). The Fall is not the point to consider in itself, but rather the way in which it is used to set up Milton’s argument, is. Through the actions of Eve and Satan, Milton demonstrates that until we make a choice (sometimes incorrectly, albeit with the best intentions), we cannot discover the merit or consequence of our decision. Without such knowledge, how would we know anything? Stephen Orgel writes, “there is no notion of good without a notion of evil: we know things by their contraries”, and that is certainly a big part of how Milton presents the story within *PL* (*PL*, xviii). What Milton does is blur the lines of “good” and “evil” to make understanding these contrary points a more involving experience, meant to provoke the audience into thinking about *what* is being said through the story and *how* that is influential. As such, the audience comes to understand how they are affected, they learn more about how to think beyond the story itself, and, as such, the narrative becomes an informative event, rather than simple entertainment (Herman, 203).



Satan hinted to Eve that God was jealously withholding information from her and it was this notion that allowed him to convince her to take on his point of view. In his introduction to the 2008 edition of *PL*, Philip Pullman wrote how this idea was of particular interest to his own trilogy: "Suppose that the prohibition on the knowledge of good and evil were an expression of jealous cruelty, and the gaining of such knowledge an act of virtue? Suppose the Fall should be celebrated and not deplored?" (Milton/Pullman, 10). The implication from Pullman's own story (and one can also see it within *PL*) is that to enquire after knowledge and desire to obtain it, is not a bad thing and that to Fall in the attempt of accessing knowledge should not be considered a failure either. This is the point I will consider in the next part of this chapter as we explore how Lyra has developed due her experiences and the influence put upon her by Asriel.

### *Northern Lights: becoming Lyra Silvertongue*

Throughout *Northern Lights* the reader sees Lyra progress into a formidable *rhetor* in her own right, but by the end of the novel, Pullman also shows she still has a great deal to learn. Following Asriel's speech, Lyra endures many trials that help hone her abilities as a *rhetor*, including escaping Mrs. Coulter's custody in London, helping Iorek Byrnison reclaim his stolen armour in Trollesund and freeing children from the threat of intercision at the research facility, Bolvangar. Lyra manages to succeed in each scenario through her ability to quickly assess a situation and use her wit to outsmart any antagonist she encounters. She is also helped by her use of the alethiometer, a device that enables Lyra to truthfully discern any question she asks of it by interpreting the symbols on its compass-like face. Through a combination of her skills and experiences, Lyra becomes a force to be reckoned with, but

the reader will see that she is still susceptible to being manipulated by figures of authority, like Lord Asriel. As such, despite her numerous successes, it becomes clear at the end of *NL* that Lyra must continue to mature if she is to develop her own understanding and learn from her mistakes. The two examples that I will use to suggest that both good and bad come from Lyra's decisions are her manipulation of Iofur Raknison and then her encounter with Lord Asriel at the novel's conclusion. In Chapter Two, I focused solely on analysing *Northern Lights*, rather than the trilogy as a whole; I will continue in the same fashion here as it allows me to maintain a succinct yet detailed analysis of Lyra's early development as she moves from innocence to experience.

First, the reader sees Lyra use her abilities to trick Iofur Raknison, who usurped her friend and protector, Iorek Byrnison, from his position as king of the Svalbard bears. She intends to get the two bears to fight one another in the hope that Iorek can reclaim his kingship. Iorek's victory would enable Lyra to succeed in reaching her father and bringing him the alethiometer. Earlier in the novel, Iorek states that tricking a bear is impossible: "We see tricks and deceit as plain as arms and legs. We can see in a way humans have forgotten" (*NL*, 227). This comment is disquieting for Lyra as she has never encountered a scenario she could not overcome without trickery. However, Iorek continues, "But you know about this; you can understand the symbol reader...perhaps you are different from others" (*NL*, 228). Iorek suggests that Lyra is capable of adopting a different state of mind and later on, this belief of others in her abilities of interpretation gives her the confidence to overcome supposedly impossible odds. It also puts emphasis on the significance of interpretation itself, which, in turn, subtly prompts the reader to consider how their own acts of interpretation might be effective, too.

Upon hearing Iofur's name mentioned during her interchange with Iorek, Lyra recalls one of the Scholars saying the bear-king was "vain, and [that] he could be flattered" (NL, 225-226). From this, the reader will see Lyra beginning to develop a cunning plan; one that takes further shape when she finds herself imprisoned in Svalbard with an old scholar. Through him, Lyra is reminded that the bear-king desires a daemon of his own; though this is something that is impossible as only humans and witches have daemons in Lyra's world. Similar to Eve, as seen in her discussion with Adam, and then later, to herself, when the opportunity presents itself, Lyra makes use of both her knowledge and what she sees around her to actively reason out the best course of action. Thus, Lyra acknowledges Iorek's claim that a bear cannot be tricked,<sup>25</sup> but she also understands that Iofur is thinking like a human because of his desire for a daemon (NL, 334). From this, Lyra believes she has come up with:

A way of making Iofur Raknison do what he would normally never have done;  
a way of restoring Iorek Byrnison to his rightful throne; a way, finally, of  
getting to the place where they had put Lord Asriel, and taking him the  
alethiometer. (NL, 334).

Here, the narrator makes use of *anaphora*, (repetition of "a way of" at the beginning of successive clauses). This string of statements suggests that numerous troubling scenarios can be overcome in one fell swoop; though a great deal rides on its success or failure. *Anaphora* enhances the *pathos* appeal of the narration because of the way in which it builds toward a *climax*; it is meant to excite the reader and is emphasised by the word "finally",

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<sup>25</sup> This was proven in her attempt to fence with Iorek. Lyra fails to land a single blow against the bear because he can read her actions before she makes them (NL, 226-227).

which indicates that a solution has been a long time coming. After resolving her plan, Lyra works to gain an audience with Iofur by tricking the bear-guard who is watching over her.

Iofur has adopted the human way of doing things on Svalbard, as such, “none of the bears was certain yet how to behave”, which means Lyra can use their doubt to her advantage (*NL*, 335). The bear’s behaviour is akin to the *decorum* Lyra experienced at Jordan College, and she likens the situation to a time when she used to “give herself airs and lord [the grandeur and ritual of Jordan College] over the other urchins” back in Oxford (*NL*, 37). Just as Satan made Eve feel superior in *PL*, Lyra makes the guard think he is superior to her. She does this by backtracking on her initial, bold interaction with him: “Take me to Iofur Raknison. You’ll be in trouble if you don’t. It’s very urgent” (*NL*, 334). Although an abrasive interaction to open with, it does allow her to outline her *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos* appeals to secure the bear’s attention. This statement is very similar to Asriel’s concluding remarks at the end of chapter one of *NL* (discussed in Chapter Two of this thesis) suggesting that Asriel’s influence still inform Lyra’s actions in the present. Her direct command (“Take me to Iofur”) establishes her *ethos* appeal and the mix of a threat with the claim of urgency provides the *pathos* and *logos* appeals (why the bear should listen and what will happen if he does not). Although the bear’s expression is difficult to read, Lyra judges he is angry with her and so she quickly tailors her speech to appear more respectful. In this instance, she abides by the *decorum* she knows is confusing the bear to more easily trick him: “I’m sorry, I don’t mean to be rude, but you see, it’s the rule that the king has to know things first [...] It wouldn’t be polite. He’d be ever so cross if he knew we hadn’t been polite” (*NL*, 335). As an observant *rhetor* in this scenario, Lyra recognises her “audience as impassive [...] and malleable” because of the strangeness of the *decorum* they are expected to abide by, and so

the manipulative effect of her rhetoric works to subtly compel her target “to assume a passive role” (Jost, 226). Likewise, her *pathos* appeal leads the guard to think he is doing the right thing. At the very least, her claim works to “mystify the bear sufficiently to make him pause” and so he submits and takes her to his king (*NL*, 335).

This short interaction shows how capable a liar Lyra has become; she makes good use of her experiences but also manipulates the circumstances around her to tailor her language to better influence her target. Lyra is conscious of the way in which language can be manipulated and, as a capable story-teller herself, she exploits ambiguities in language (Jost, 153-154). While lying is far from a moral trait for a hero to possess, it is evidence of effective rhetoric and Lyra’s lies are not used with sinister intent, as those seen through the likes of Asriel or Mrs. Coulter. Instead, Lyra presents a more selfless use of manipulation and when we consider Gadamer’s claim that “the task of making a moral decision is that of doing the right thing in a particular situation”, Lyra’s methods appear justified in her attempt to achieve success for a greater good (Gadamer, 327). The situation Lyra finds herself makes lying necessary to achieve her goal; her results are undeniably effective here, just as they are when she encounters Iofur.

After being led into the throne room, however, Iofur’s physical presence is enough to make Lyra immediately doubt her actions, and she is described as “quailing” before the king:

[Iofur Raknison] was the biggest bear she had ever seen...even taller and bulkier than Iorek, and his face was much more mobile and expressive, with a kind of humanness in it [...] He was wearing a heavy gold chain [...] his] claws – a good six inches long – were each covered in gold leaf [...] he was quite big

enough to carry the absurd over-decoration; on him [...] it looked barbaric and magnificent. (NL, 336).

While this *panegyric* narration presents Iofur as a grandiose figure (evidence of *prosopographia*), it is undermined in the next paragraph when Lyra notices his weakness: a stuffed doll sitting on his knee. This tiny feature strips away any fear Lyra has of the great bear because it confirms everything she had heard about him to be true: “He was pretending he had a daemon. Then she knew she was safe” (NL, 337). “In trying to be human [Iofur reverses] the order of things [creating] something unnatural [and] exposing himself to Lyra’s trickery”; this, in tandem with the human characteristics she sees in his face, indicate to Lyra how she can subdue Iofur (Lenz/Scott, 44). She observes him as appearing human to the point where it “seemed a man was looking out of his eyes”, for Lyra, this is a good thing as the more human he appears, the easier he will be to read and thus manipulate (NL, 336).

Lyra immediately grabs Iofur’s attention by using *metanoia*, where her statement, “Our greetings to you, great king”, is quickly corrected a qualified, “Or I mean *my* greetings, not his”, which makes the king curious (NL, 337). She also makes use of *comprobatio*, calling Iofur “great” to flatter him and completes her introduction with the use of the vague possessive pronoun “his”. This causes Iofur to ask immediately, “Not whose?” (NL, 337). Lyra’s plan is to establish the idea that she is Iorek’s daemon and make Iofur jealous. Her aim is to make him believe that she can become his daemon if he fights and kills Iorek. When she tells him who she is, “Only his astonishment prevented him from killing her on the spot” (NL, 338). She makes use of yet more *comprobatio* (something that Pantalaimon, Lyra’s daemon, also encourages her to do, “Flatter him! . . . That’s all he wants”) to distract

lofur from her lies (NL, 341). This also has the added benefit of making it appear as though she is on his side: “I want to help you, that’s why I’ve come [...], I would much rather be your daemon than his, that’s why I came” (NL, 338). Her repetition of “that’s why I’ve come”/“came” ensures that Iofur is aware of the *logos* of her argument as it reinforces her purpose of being there and, with this appeal firmly entrenched in his mind, Lyra then moves on to enhance her *pathos* appeal.

What is particularly interesting in this scenario is the way in which Lyra clearly dominates their conversation, which becomes heavily one-sided. Despite his status as king, Iofur says no more than a few short sentences at any given time, which contrasts Lyra’s longer speeches. Furthermore, when Iofur does speak, he merely asks questions or makes short statements in reply to Lyra, who intentionally withholds information from him to distract him from seeing through her plan. For instance, in reply to his frantic question: “how has a bear got a daemon? [...] And how are you so far from him?” Lyra replies (NL, 338):

‘That’s easy. I can go far from him because I’m like a witch’s daemon. You know how they can go hundreds of miles from their humans? It’s like that. And as for how he got me, it was at Bolvangar. You’ve heard of Bolvangar, because Mrs. Coulter must have told you about it, but she probably didn’t tell you everything they do there.’

‘Cutting. . .’ he said.

‘Yes, cutting, that’s part of it, intercision [...]’ (NL, 338).

Here, Lyra calls on information that both of them share (*anamnesis*) and backs up her false claims with facts; for instance, the *lie* that she is a daemon is believable because it is *true* that a witch can separate by long distances from their daemon. Even her lies are crafted to

make logical sense: humans have animal-formed daemons, so it seems only logical to assume that if a bear had a daemon, then it would be human-formed (*NL*, 338). The truth in Lyra's lies grants her claims greater believability, and so her *ethos* is enhanced by Iofur's recognition that she has information he desires.

Upon believing his rival has a daemon, Iofur's intrigue turns to rage, demonstrating the effect of Lyra's *pathos* appeal; she discovers she can use his reaction to her advantage and advance "part of [her] carefully reasoned case" (Herrick, 89). Iofur "roared so loudly that the crystal in the chandeliers tinkled...and Lyra's ears rang. But she was equal to it" (*NL*, 339). She rises quickly to give false-praise to Iofur and to him the speech that follows seems purely *panegyric*; the irony is he does not realise that Lyra is lying because he is too caught up in the sway of her rhetoric to notice:

That's why I love you best [...] because you're passionate and strong as well as clever. And I just had to leave him and come and tell you, because I don't want him ruling the bears. It ought to be you [...] if you defeat Iorek Byrnison in single combat. Then his strength will flow into you, and my mind will flow into yours, and we'll be like one person, thinking each other's thoughts [...] I'd help you lead the bears [...] We could do anything, Iofur Raknison, you and me together! (*NL*, 339-340).

In this instance, we see Lyra go through the six stages of speech outlined by the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, discussed earlier. She goes through these stages to form a succinct, yet highly influential speech that is meant to sway the bear in the concluding stages of their meeting. In her *exordium*, Lyra makes use of a *tricolon* to summarise the reasons why she "loves Iofur best" because he is "passionate [...] strong [...] clever". By opening her speech in this way, she appeals directly to Iofur's vanity, which she knows is the easiest way to win his favour. Lyra uses "I", "me", and "my" a collective five times to ensure the *pathos* appeal of



her speech comes across as being personal, which is also enhanced by use of the word “we” to describe them as a collective unit. This opening appeal impacts the *narration* of her argument, in which she explains the plan she wants Iofur to follow, and her emphatic praise is meant to encourage him to follow through with her suggestions. Lyra backs these up through the insertion of *division* and *proof*, where, first; she insults Iorek (“I don’t want him ruling the bears”) and, second; she explains what will happen when Iofur defeats his opponent: “if you defeat Iorek [...] we’ll be like one mind”. *Refutation* comes in when Iofur begins to reply to her claims, saying “But you – how can –”, but Lyra interrupts him and continues with her persuasion “I *can* become your daemon” (the fact Iofur does not stop her when she interrupts is a testament to her influence over him, too). This leads her on to her dramatic *peroration* where she builds toward an exclamatory *climax* to drive her point home: “We could do anything [...] you and me together!” This entire speech,<sup>26</sup> which takes place over two paragraphs, features only eight full stops, which suggests it is being said quickly, proving Lyra’s passion.

As a result of her speech, Iofur is described as pacing the room in “an air of explosive excitement” (NL, 338). As effective as this speech is, Iofur is not yet completely won over and, similar to Milton’s Eve wanting to see the apple in Eden for herself, Iofur requires actual *proof*, rather than relying solely on what Lyra says to be true. He decides to test her supposed skills as a daemon and she does this by answering questions that no one else knows the answers to. She succeeds in this task through use of the alethiometer and discovers who Iofur’s first kill was (his own father) and also reveals the promises made to him by Mrs. Coulter (that he would be baptised as a Christian). She uses this as ammunition

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<sup>26</sup> The full speech is featured in the Appendix.

to enhance her argument: first, by praising Iofur's skill in combat ("you're a new god...that's what you must be") and second, to refute Mrs. Coulter's promises in order to fuel his rage yet again: "quite honestly I don't think they'd ever agree [to baptise you] if you didn't have a daemon" (*NL*, 342). She is aware of how his rage clouds his judgement, which, in turn, makes him more prone to believing what she tells him.

Having successfully proven herself, Iofur actively seeks Lyra's counsel, showing him to be firmly in her power: "What should I do?", "What should we tell them?" (*NL*, 342-343). His use of the word "we" shows he is already viewing them as being a unit and we can draw parallels with Satan and Beelzebub's conversation in Book I of *PL*. It is not surprising to see similar events occurring in *HDM* (it is demonstrative of the influence of Milton's work upon Pullman's) and we can also take it as evidence of mythemes, as there are evidently ideas here which have been readjusted and adapted between different myths.

Lyra marvels at her own skill and the control she has over this powerful creature, so much so she nearly forgets herself: "Lyra found her power over him was almost intoxicating, and if Pantalaimon hadn't nipped her hand...she might have lost all her sense of proportion" (*NL*, 343). This is an interesting point to end this section of analysis on as it shows the importance of restraint in the use of rhetoric. The difficulty in many cases is that those who possess power often do not want to give it up once it is theirs. In this scenario, Pullman demonstrates how easily power can corrupt and Iofur stands as a clear example of this. However, the reader is shown how easily this can also influence someone who appears inherently good, like Lyra. In this way, Pullman warns readers of the need to err on the side of caution, stressing the importance of using our reason to exercise restraint (shown through Lyra's consciousness in Pantalaimon).

Just as with the guard, the reader is left to wonder if Lyra's ability to be manipulative is a good or a bad thing, especially when those whom she is directing her skills at are seen as inherently bad characters. The manipulation of Iofur Raknison, as a corrupt, lying individual in his own right, helps Lyra progress to achieve her well-intentioned goals and even though she was lying, she only acted after taking the time to think her actions over. As such, while the action of lying itself may be considered amoral, her use of reason to make her decision is moral. Herrick discusses how "the art of rhetoric has both a practical and a moral component [...] it engages our decision making capacities on matters than involve our value commitments"; what we see in Lyra is the act of internal debate, similar, again, to Eve, where each weighs up the facts to make a decision that can be justified (Herrick, 16). Other characters in *NL* certainly see Lyra's actions in a positive light and even praise her ability to be manipulative. For instance, Iorek renames her "Lyra Silvertongue" (discarding her old name, Belacqua) as a sign of his reverence toward her (*NL*, 348). Lyra wears her new name with great pride and she continues to be recognised by it throughout the trilogy and beyond, seen in the short sequel, *Lyra's Oxford* (*Lyra's Oxford*, 11 and 42). Silvertongue does bring with it more controversy though, not only as a badge of honour for lying, but through association to Satan: the phrase "silver-tongued devil" can be associated with Satan, thus its connection to a child can be disturbing. However, readers ultimately see good come out from Iofur's defeat and Lyra evidently makes use of her ability to reason before taking action. However, as we go on to see, she does not always use her skills with complete infallibility.

Lyra is still a child and her lack of experience means she is not as capable as some adults are at making the right choices; as such, Lyra "must stumble [...] toward the

knowledge that constitutes freedom” and learn through her own trial and error (Rutledge, 125). In the final three chapters of *NL*, Asriel’s own rhetoric comes back into play and, as with Eve, we see the way in which the good intentions of one person can be manipulated to achieve terrible results. However, Like Eve, Lyra’s grand failure can also be understood as being a good thing in the long run because it aids in improving her understanding and ability to be perceptive. Lyra’s understanding of her world may unravel, but in her final experience it is as though a blindfold has been removed from her eyes. She begins to see the world more clearly because of her dualistic experiences of having achieved great success and severe failure.

### Betrayal and revelation

After beating Iofur, Lyra still firmly believes that by taking the alethiometer to Lord Asriel she is doing the right thing, but when she finally sees him again, Asriel’s reception of her is far from welcoming. Upon seeing Lyra “his eyes widened, in horror, as he recognised his daughter [...] he seemed appalled [...] she couldn’t believe his distress” but when Roger (now with Lyra, having been saved from Bolvangar) steps up beside her, Asriel’s shock subsides (*NL*, 364). Later, in private, Roger says to Lyra that he is afraid of Asriel because of how he looked at him, as if he had been eyeing up a meal. However, due to a combination of her own tiredness and recent experiences with Asriel, Lyra plays down Roger’s fears: “I’m afraid of him too, sometimes [...] You’re imagining it”. Through Roger’s apprehension and Asriel’s bizarre reaction to seeing his daughter, the reader may begin to suspect that something is certainly amiss though (*NL*, 366).

It has been over three hundred pages since these two characters last interacted with one another and now the reader gets to see Lyra use her own rhetorical skills against Asriel's. In their earlier conversations, Lyra quickly submitted to Asriel's demands, for example, shortly after the incident in the Retiring Room he demands she stop arguing with him "or I shall be angry" and she obeys (NL, 29). However, after the experiences of her journey, she now appears far more determined, and in this new confrontation of theirs, Lyra tries to make herself appear stronger and hardier than before. As such, she attempts to control their discussion by speaking first and most frequently. This sort of behaviour worked for her before (as it did over Iofur), so she reasons it will again:

'You're my father, en't you? [...] You should have told me before [...] What difference would it make if I knew I was your daughter? You could have said it years ago. You could've told me years ago and asked me to keep it secret' (NL, 367).

Unfortunately, Lyra's exhausted passion gets the better of her and rather than pause to give her father the chance to speak and reply to her questions, she simply carries on her passionate tirade.<sup>27</sup> Her speech is accusatory and direct; use of the word "you" and "your" (used twenty two times collectively over two consecutive speeches) is demonstrative of her passion and focus. However, Asriel knows better than to give rise to her behaviour and so sits still, seemingly content to listen. In most cases when he does answer, Asriel does so with short, simple replies: "Yes. So what?", "Did he [John Faa] tell you about your mother?"<sup>28</sup> (NL, 367, 368). Acting in this way establishes his *ethos* to combat Lyra's and demonstrates

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<sup>27</sup> The full quote can be found in the Appendix

<sup>28</sup> King of the Gyptians (nomadic travellers, of a sort) and a good man who helps Lyra on her journey, he revealed to Lyra that Lord Asriel is her father and Mrs Coulter is her mother.

his forceful yet eloquent method of arguing. He probes Lyra for information without malice, though with clear authority (as she always answers), and provides succinct yet informative answers of his own when he feels it necessary to satisfy Lyra's questions. Their methods stand in stark contrast to one another and, in this instance, despite the frequency of her words, Lyra's rhetoric carries less weight against Asriel's. It becomes apparent to all but herself that she is being manipulated.

In many ways, one might view the meeting between Lyra and Asriel as a form of *digressio* from the story itself. Pullman constructs a hugely emotional scene at the *climax* of Lyra's journey but does so in order to distract the reader from considering Asriel's sinister motivations, which have been hinted at by Roger. Pullman ensures the *pathos* appeal keeps them focused on her anguish. This is further enhanced by Lyra herself, who uses the pronouns "I", "me" and "my", forty times over the same two pages in which she verbally attacks Asriel, thus drawing a great deal of attention to herself (NL, 367-368). Even though she claims to hate Asriel, Lyra still listens to him and it becomes increasingly apparent how even Asriel's simple, minimalistic rhetoric can be effective. After Lyra finished, Asriel "was so quiet and relaxed that some of her ferocity dwindled" and so she begins to speak with less certainty until her *ethos* diminishes completely. At this point, Asriel simply says, "Tell me everything" to Lyra, "So she did" (NL, 369).

In this exchange we see evidence of two different rhetorical styles, a passive and aggressive approach. What we see in Asriel is an individual capable of adapting their rhetoric to suit the given situation. Keith talks of how "Rhetoric is strategic [...] the speaker must figure out how to deliver the message in a way that garners a positive reaction" (Keith, 12). We observe how Asriel can give both long, eloquent speeches but also short, simple

statements and each appears equally effective, but they are also wholly dependent on the situation in which they are used. By contrast, we see Lyra continue in her singularly belligerent manner and she finds it more difficult to adapt. While successful in her time with Iofur, Lyra seems incapable of tailoring her speech in a new situation; she has not yet been in a scenario where talking fails to help her and so cannot handle Asriel's reaction. This is demonstrative of her need (and so too the reader's) to continue to observe and learn from what they see.

What follows after Lyra tells Asriel about her journey is her enquiring about the nature of Dust. It is here that Pullman's myth becomes even thought-provoking, prompting controversial philosophical and theological questions. Many features of the story begin to connect through Asriel's discussion of Dust; including the significance of the northern lights, the true reason for intercision and Asriel's own intentions to cross into another world. Understanding Dust is difficult, especially at this early stage in the trilogy, but Pullman has Asriel carefully walk Lyra and the reader through what it is. First, Asriel says it is what makes the alethiometer work, which is important for Lyra as it suggests that Dust is a *good* thing because the alethiometer has had a positive influence. However, Asriel then discusses some of the science behind it. He explains that Dust is an "elementary particle [...] like electrons, photons, neutrinos", but due to the way in which Dust is attracted to humans (more to adults, less to children) the Magisterium, who pass judgement on scientific discoveries in relation to the church, used Dust as evidence to support the physical existence of original sin (NL, 370-371).

This explanation presents Burke's consideration of a myth's relationship to religion. Similar "philosophical ideas" that are considered in religion can emerge in myth, but instead

of appearing as religious doctrine, they are “expressed in narrative form” and so capable of being read in different ways (Coupe, *Burke on Myth*, viii). Furthermore, because they are recognisable as being from our own reality, it is easier to identify with the portrayal of religious concepts in the myth. For some critics, such as Pat Pinsent in Butler’s *Philip Pullman*, Pullman’s more explicit connection to the concept of religion comes across as “hostile” (C. Butler, 21). This is worrying because a negative portrayal of the church has the potential to influence “a young reader without [religious] knowledge” to develop “a distaste for the representatives of established religion” which, unfortunately, can undermine the more positive intentions existing with Pullman’s mythology (C. Butler, 21). Because the aggressive representation of the church appears so strongly, it threatens to take over a consideration of anything else in the text, such as the encouragement of plural thinking (Gooderham, pg. 159).

In the closing chapters of *NL*, *HDM*’s controversial connection to the Biblical Fall becomes more apparent as it begins to make more overt subversions of the original story and portray it in a negative light. This becomes clear as readers observe Asriel read from Chapter Three of Genesis, wherein Adam and Eve eat the forbidden fruit:

*“And the eyes of them both were opened, and they saw the true form of their daemons, and spoke with them.*

*“But when the man and the woman knew their own daemons. They knew that a great change had come upon them:*

*And they saw the difference, and they knew good and evil [...]*

*‘And that was how sin came into the world [...] the moment their daemons became fixed’ (NL, 372).*



Following the discovery of Dust and how it reacted to humans, the church became fixated on the idea that when a daemon takes its fixed form (which typically happens when a child reaches adolescence) it means they are tainted by original sin. As sin is something the church desires to avoid, they allow the act of intercision because they believe that by cutting away a child's daemon they can prevent the effects of original sin and so rid the world of its corruption. However, not believing they take their experiments far enough, Asriel reveals that rather than prevent the influence of Dust, he instead wants to destroy it at its source and so bring an end to sin and corruption altogether. To do this he must enter the world seen through the northern lights.

At this point, Lyra is described as being "afraid of her father," admiring him and seeing him as mad and readers may react similarly (*NL*, 378). The heroic figure of Asriel has become warped here and he does not appear the stoic adventurer that came across in the beginning of the book. The sudden influx of information becomes immensely confusing for Lyra: "Speechless, too bewildered by this to voice any of the dozen urgent questions that pressed her mind, she took up the alethiometer...sat by the fire and watched him leave the room" (*NL*, 378). These scenes are meant to bewilder the reader just as much as they are Lyra, further distracting them both from considering Asriel's actions. Due to the controversial nature of Asriel's proposal (and so too Pullman's ideas about the church and authoritarian control) both Lyra and the reader's perceptions begin to broaden due to the information they have just received. However, it is not until she is awoken by Thorold, Lord Asriel's manservant, that events begin to make clear but dreadful sense:

[...] a fierce cry of despair enveloped her...

She had just realised what she'd done.

She had struggled all this way to bring something to Lord Asriel, thinking she knew what he wanted; and it wasn't the alethiometer at all. What he wanted was a child.

*She had brought him Roger [...]*

Oh, the bitter anguish! She had thought she was saving Roger, and all the time she'd been diligently working to betray him. (*NL*, 380).

Lyra rushes to confront her father in a desperate attempt to save her friend, but unfortunately, she fails. Lord Asriel succeeds in killing Roger and harnesses his death as part of his explosive experiment to open the northern lights and make a bridge to another world.

It becomes clear that through much of the myth, both Lyra and the reader have been intentionally kept in the dark. We have already seen how the structure of the story (and Lyra's perspective) helps to guide the reader through the adventure, as does the straightforward goal (for Lyra to save her friend and find her father). In this way, Pullman enacts his own authorial/authoritarian control over the audience by intentionally limiting the perspective of his audience in this first book. This is all done toward the goal of improving the audience's ability to perceive and interpret ideas because of *NL*'s explosive conclusion; it reveals far greater plots exist in the story as a whole, and the way in which the story continues to expand and change from this point on only exemplifies this point.

Similarly to Lyra, the reader could not know how the story would end because of the limited perspectives they are given. In this way, Pullman actively demonstrates how limited engagement with only a single perspective can inhibit our abilities of interpretation. The story of *NL* works towards revealing Pullman's overall message and his intention to give importance to the process of maturity and the difficulty of moving from a state of innocence to experience. In his conversation with Rowan Williams, Pullman spoke how this process can

be “very difficult to deal with” and both Lyra and the reader experience this for themselves upon seeing Asriel’s shockingly explosive betrayal (*SoundCloud*: 11:37-39).

This takes us back to Pullman’s quote: “Suppose that the prohibition on the knowledge of good and evil were an expression of jealous cruelty, and the gaining of such knowledge an act of virtue?” (Milton/Pullman, 10). The stifling of knowledge, the prevention of thought and discovery only ever lead to negative things happening in this story, but as we have seen, when Lyra applies her own thought and reason, and accepts the aid of the alethiometer to provide her with new perspectives to consider, she becomes capable of achieving a great deal of good. Granted she can still make mistakes, but her fatal actions in this early stage of her life, as with Eve, are the result of deception and selfish manipulation.

Having experienced both success and defeat, Pantalaimon prompts Lyra to consider Dust in a whole new way, until now, she has been unable to comprehend the bigger picture because of her singular point of view. Ganeri points out that “one’s daemon encourages one toward wisdom [because] it is a good part of oneself” and Pantalaimon, as a part of Lyra’s consciousness, helps her try to make good, reasonable decisions (such as preventing her from taking Iofur’s manipulation too far) (Ganeri, 272):

‘We’ve heard them all talk about Dust, and they’re so afraid of it, and you know what? We believed them, even though we could see what they were doing was wicked and evil and wrong... We thought Dust must be bad too, because they were grown-up and said so. But what if it isn’t? What if it’s —’

She said breathlessly, ‘Yeah! What if it’s really *good*...’ [...]

If Dust were a *good* thing... If it were to be sought and welcomed and cherished... (*NL*, 397-398).

The implication from Pullman's own story (and one can also see it within *PL*) is that to enquire after knowledge and desire to obtain it, is not a bad thing; it is natural and so should be embraced. Pullman's "intention [is] to say something true about human psychology and the human condition" and we see Lyra's development, from innocent child to wiser *rhetor*, as demonstrative of this intention (James, 231). Pullman elaborated on this in his conversation with Rowan Williams, when he spoke of how "the coming of understanding of things - and [...] the beginning of intellectual inquiry" occurs, "typically in one's adolescence" when we become "interested in poetry and art and science and all these other things" (*Soundcloud*, 11:15-29). His story demonstrates how hindering this stage with absolute control can never result in good being done and so to contrast this, *NL* reveals the positive effect that the liberation of knowledge can have and puts importance on the need to "try out new connections, new realities, new levels of being" to better inform our lives (Ganeri, 279). One can hardly deny how the dramatic finale demonstrates this point.

Lyra desires to right her wrongs and prevent the destruction of Dust (both she and Pantalaimon firmly believe it is good because it has helped them thus far). It becomes clear, then, that Lyra has experienced a great change by the conclusion of this part of the trilogy and reader will see that both her positive and negative experiences have enabled her to better understanding the world around her. Just as *Paradise Lost* concludes with Adam and Eve leaving Eden, *Northern Lights* ends with Lyra and Pantalaimon resolving to continue on their own way and make sense of the new world and the possibilities that have literally exploded to life in front of them. Even with all the provocative, controversial questions posed at its conclusion, Pullman's story invites the reader to join "Lyra and her daemon [as

they] turned away from the world they were born in, and looked towards the sun, and walked into the sky" (*NL*, 399).

### Chapter Conclusion

At the beginning of this chapter, I asked the question whether or not the actions made by Eve and Lyra are the result of decisions they make for themselves, or if they are manipulated into making them. From the analysis, we see it is very much a mixture of both. Certainly, each of them is capable of using their reason to make decisions: Eve deliberates with Adam about what actions they should undertake, and later with herself to figure out what it is *she* wants to do; Lyra behaves similarly, having learnt from others various bits of information she forms a plan and acts, with positive results. Due to their naivety (which readers have observed) – because of their innocence and lack of experience – and even after their successes, when they face *rheto*rs that do possess more knowledge, the inexperienced inevitably succumb to manipulation. The rhetoric of Satan and Asriel is simply too great for Eve and Lyra to resist, and so they Fall.

What the examples discussed in this chapter do, though, is demonstrate how each character begins to adopt a new way of thinking and how it is that a reader of these myths can learn from observing these characters' experiences. At the conclusion of their respective manipulations, it becomes evident that despite the tragedy they have experienced, Eve and Lyra are capable of both learning and moving on from that experience. As such, their actions before and their reactions after their Falls can be seen as positive; neither resigns herself, in any situation, to defeat, and each instead displays a determination and desire to take action and continue in their attempts to do good, judged, again, by their own reason.

At the end of Book IX of *PL* and the conclusion of *NL*, both Eve and Lyra have satisfied (for now) their curiosity for knowledge, albeit with disastrous results, but this experience has taught them a lesson: to act with caution and restraint. In observing this, the reader can consider their own actions and how they might use their own reason – something that becomes necessary due to the more complex nature of the questions posed in the latter stages of these myths (particularly those that are provocative toward religion and a consideration of morality). Looking at their actions, readers certainly see *why* Eve and Lyra come to make their choices and, as a result, see *how* to avoid similar mistakes for themselves; they may stumble in the effort, but it is all part of knowing things by their contraries and learning through their own trial and error.

## Conclusion - Moving on after Myth

Neither *Paradise Lost* nor *His Dark Materials* offers a definitive ending for their characters and one would be hard-pressed to say that these myths end happily for their heroes. After all, Adam and Eve are expelled from Eden (Satan, if viewed as the hero, suffers eternal punishment in Hell) and Lyra and Will,<sup>29</sup> who assume the role of our “grand parents” in Pullman’s work, have to set aside their love for one another and live apart, each in their own universe (I:29). There is no final ‘happily ever after’ in these myths and the cathartic release that one might expect the reader to experience upon finishing such tragic stories is largely absent.

Pullman argues a happily ever after “certainly won’t do” for *PL* and that the poem presents something more substantial in its closing lines: “‘the world was all before them’ implies not only an end but a new beginning” (Milton/Pullman, 7, 8).<sup>30</sup> The same can be said of Pullman’s own myth, as Bradley and Tate observe: the conclusion of “*HDM* seems to foreshadow many more stories” to come and each book in the trilogy acts in much the same way (as previously discussed with *NL*); where one story ends, a new one begins (Bradley/Tate, 81). We might say that the lack of a definitive conclusion is more fully representative of the real lives led by the readers, away from the pages of the book.

To balance the sense of emotional loss, it is important to note that the endings are not entirely sorrowful ordeals; that is just one part of their whole. Instead, each myth “closes on a mood, a tender emotional harmony, that is both crystal clear and profoundly complex” (Milton/Pullman, 8). Yes, there is sadness, but there are also definite signs of hope

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<sup>29</sup> If Lyra is Pullman’s version of Eve, then Will is very much his Adam.

<sup>30</sup> From Book XII, line 646. A larger portion of the quote is in the Appendix.

and a powerful sense that some good has been achieved despite their respective Falls. After all, in *PL*, humanity is saved from the threat of inevitable damnation through God's promise of redemption (pending repentance). In *HDM*, the stability of all worlds is maintained because the heroes choose not to be selfish and instead strive to commit acts of good. The idea of what this 'good' is, exactly, is vague, but that is precisely the point. Both *PL* and *HDM* invite their readers to think and reflect on everything they have just read and on the potential of what might happen next. The point of each author's rhetoric is that the readers *themselves* can decide how to affect their own lives, just as the characters they have connected with appear to have done.

By focusing on the contemporary theory of rhetoric, heavily influenced by Kenneth Burke, this thesis has presented three ways these myths work to influence their audience. First, Chapter One demonstrated how the structures developed by Milton and Pullman frame their myths and pull the reader in so they are more easily guided through the story. In this analysis of structure, I considered the significance of Claude Lévi-Strauss' mytheme concept, as well as Terry Pratchett's view of narrative causality. In both cases, each discusses how a myth can be restructured and reshaped to tell familiar, yet different stories; as in the way Milton and Pullman appropriate the Fall of Man. Milton tells his version of the story through a formulaic structure maintained over ten thousand lines of poetry, whose tight focus keeps the audience's attention throughout. Pullman's myth, which discusses the concept of an individual's awakening consciousness, adopts a structure that matures along with his characters: it starts off with clear, simple divisions that are easy to follow, but gradually becomes more fragmented and complex as it grows and develops.



Following this focus on structure, I analysed two different approaches to speeches made by key characters in each myth. In Chapter Two, I elected to study two experienced *rhethors*, Satan and Lord Asriel; I also considered the effect of the narration that preceded these character's speeches. The aim of this analysis was to investigate how Milton and Pullman hooked their audiences from the very early stages of their stories. Their influence comes through a mixture of subtle rhetorical devices that are used to elevate the status of the figures who speak, thus piquing the reader's curiosity. The speakers then hint at greater plots that are yet to unfold in an attempt to ensure that the reader will want to carry on reading each story. In conjunction with this, I considered the effect of joint spectatorship and how the reader's personal involvement in the myth is enhanced through association to a figure they feel they can relate to.

Chapter Three featured the second analysis of narrative build-up and speeches, focusing on a central character from each myth, Eve and Lyra. I considered how these two characters had been affected by the influence of the master *rhethors* analysed in Chapter Two; I also considered how these master *rhethors* appear in opposition to Eve and Lyra. This chapter argued that one individual's rhetoric can affect another's and I noted the ways these characters change and develop because of this influence. Altogether, these three sections of analysis come together to demonstrate how myths can work to influence their readers and affect a change in them.

The narrator's first appeal to the heavenly muse in *PL* acts as part of a fitting summation of the ideals that both Milton and Pullman express through their myths: "what is dark in me / Illumine, what is low raise and support" (l:22-23). These texts aspire to inspire their readers,

leading them toward a form of personal enlightenment. In this way, both *PL* and *HDM* act as guides from which their readers can learn. The reader may not actively be seeking guidance (not in the same way that Milton's narrator begs his heavenly muse) and they may be blissfully unaware of how one individual can subtly influence another (as is the case between Lyra and Lord Asriel), but it is clear that these stories possess the ability to influence (and perhaps aid) those who read them. As I have demonstrated, these myths can "illumine" the thoughts of readers because purpose is woven into them and rhetoric used to make their messages effective and engaging.

As with the alethiometer, the way the readers of these myths consider what they see is dependent on their interpretation of the symbols presented to them. The pursuit of knowledge through reading the alethiometer parallels our engagement with symbols in our own society, and attempting to understand these myths, just as we try to understand anything else, "requires [us] to enquire seriously, but not to reach desperately after meaning" (C. Butler, 70). This process of inquiry and investigation takes time, requires patience and one cannot always predict the effect. The unpredictability of influence is something Pullman acknowledges in a talk he gave on the teaching of English in schools. He makes it as part of a point regarding influences on his own writing. These include two books, *The Master and Margarita*, by Mikhail Bulgakov and *Titus Groan* by Mervyn Peake. Pullman says he has read the blurbs of each many times, but that he has never read their actual stories: "My point is that we can't ever know what will make a difference to us, or how powerful any influence will be, or how long we're going to distil its potency, or in what way it's going to work when it finally does" (Pullman, *Perverse*, 18-19). As mentioned in my Introduction, my younger self did not fully comprehend the influence *HDM* would have on

me when I first finished reading it, nor would I say I understood everything discussed, as was the case with *PL*, too. I still do not; but over time, I have thought about these stories, reread them and interpreted their messages by thinking about how they relate to my own experiences as well as the experiences of others. I have discussed them with friends, family, read about them in newspapers, journal articles, book reviews, and seen them talked about on television and social media: all of these have informed my own opinion of what they might mean. The research I have undertaken has also influenced every word I have written and informed my understanding on these myths: how could it not?

Influence is not something that should be forced and both Milton and Pullman consider the impact of forced influence in their own myths, portraying it as something wholly negative. Pullman demonstrates this through the horrific act of intercision and Milton shows it through Satan's conniving manipulation of Eve. In each case, manipulative, controlling influence is heavily condemned but also contrasted with acts that show how influence can come to do good. For instance, Adam and Eve's free will lets them think and contemplate about the world around them; they are allowed to Fall and make mistakes and they are also capable of recovering from them; similarly, Lyra is left free to discover her own destiny and learn from the mistakes she stumbles through, too.

These myths offer their readers the tools to begin probing at ideas so that they might decipher meaning for themselves. In my case, I became interested in looking at how stories are told and, as Pullman comments, how by "looking at [even] the tiniest possible events we might learn something interesting"; this is how I looked at rhetoric, where the subtle use of language and narrative structures can work influence the way a reader begins to understand a story's potential (Pullman, *Elementary*, 128). I think this is part of the

reason why *PL* continues to be so provocative today, its story endures because of what it still enables us to do, and it is also why I think *HDM* (now reaching the twentieth anniversary of *NL*'s publication) will come to carry a similar kind of influence, given time.

These myths enhance ideas and concepts that every person can relate to; whether it be discussions of good and evil, life and death, love and friendship, they can guide readers to engage with these (and more) in dramatic ways. In doing this, they lead readers to engage with a better understanding of themselves by providing some *other* perspective, some other world, through which they can consider themselves. Like the narrator of *PL*, or Lyra, these myths aid in our observations and understanding of the life we lead away from the pages of the book and inform our thinking, rather than dominate and control it.

We see both the familiar and unfamiliar in these myths as fact and fiction overlap so that thoughts, ideas and concepts become “embroidered and counterpointed by the teller and the listeners jointly” (*HDM*, 1090).<sup>31</sup> There is no story without these two, the teller and the listener, working in tandem with one another. Understanding this relationship in terms of rhetoric reveals at least part of the reason of why and how both *Paradise Lost* and *His Dark Materials* are so intriguing and it has made them compelling constructs to study. These myths do a great deal for us and though we may not know it or understand it straight away, they will undoubtedly continue to provide subtle guidance to readers for years to come. As such, they appear worth our time, our patience and most certainly, our ceaseless appreciation.

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<sup>31</sup> This is made in reference to Mary Malone in the Lantern Slides section of a special edition of *HDM*. It refers to Mary's attempt to understand the *mulefa*, an intelligent antelope-like race that she encounters in another world, and their concept of history and story-telling; the two seem to overlap without any clear distinction of fact and fiction but it is clear they carry great significance to them regardless.



## Glossary of Rhetorical Terms

Definitions come from either one of two sources; first, the website: *Silva Rhetoricae: The Forest of Rhetoric* (<http://rhetoric.byu.edu/>) (Burton), or, second, the Glossary featured in Sam Leith's *"You Talkin' to me?": Rhetoric from Aristotle to Obama* (Leith, pages 263-280).

**Alliteration:** "repetition of the same letter or sound within nearby words. Most often, repeated initial consonants" (Burton). Example: "**h**eaven", "**h**ides", "**h**ell" (I:1-2).

**Amplificatio:** "a generalised term for anything that tends to expansion in expression or effect" (Leith, 263). Example: "Clothed with transcendent brightness didst outshine / Myriads though bright". See also *auxesis*.

**Anacoluthon:** breaking off a sentence so the first half you write, the second part is grammatically different (Leith, 263).

**Anamnesis:** "calling to memory past matters. More specifically, citing a past author from memory" (Burton).

**Anaphora:** the repetition of words or a phrase at the beginning of a clause or sentence (Leith). Example: "**of** innocence, **of** faith, **of** bliss" (IX:411).

**Antanaclasis:** "where a word is repeated but changes its meaning" (Leith, 264). Example: use of the word "wonder" as a verb and then again but as a noun.

**Antithesis/Antithetical Statement:** Juxtaposition of contrasting words or ideas (often, although not always, in parallel structure) (Burton). Example: "in the glorious enterprise / Joined with me once, now joined / In equal ruin" (I:89-91).

**Apodioxis:** "Rejecting of someone or something (such as the adversary's argument) as being impertinent, needless, absurd, false, or wicked" (Burton).

**Apoplanesis:** "Promising to address the issue but effectively dodging it through a digression" (Burton).

**Argumentum ad populum:** "An appeal to the authority of the crowd" (Leith, 266).

**Assonance:** “Repetition of similar vowel sounds, preceded and followed by different consonants, in the stressed syllables of adjacent words” (Burton).

**Auxesis:** “Arranging words or clauses in a sequence of increasing force. In this sense, auxesis is comparable to *climax* and has sometimes been called *incrementum*” (Burton). Also see *amplificatio*.

**Climax:** “where a series of successive clauses and sentences build up in force and importance” (Leith, 267). Example: “Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste, / Of virtue to make wise: what hinders then / To reach, and feed at once both body and mind?” (IX:777).

**Comprobatio:** “Approving and commending a virtue, especially in the hearers” (Burton) “you’re passionate and strong as well as clever” (NL, 339).

**Decorum:** fitting your speech in terms of style and address to the audience it is intended to participate. (Leith, 268)

**Digressio:** “A departure from logical progression in a speech” or “a digressive sidetrack or anecdote, sometimes to add force to an argument by analogy, sometimes to distract from a tricky point” (Burton, Leith, 268).

**Enargia:** the general “name for a group of figures aiming at vivid, lively description” (Burton).

**Epitheton:** “Attributing to a person or thing a quality or description—sometimes by the simple addition of a descriptive adjective; sometimes through a descriptive or metaphorical apposition” (Burton). Example: “the infernal serpent”.

**Erotema:** See rhetorical question.

**Hypophora:** “where you ask a whole series of questions and answer them” yourself (Leith, 271).

**Hysteron Proteron:** “Disorder of time. (What should be first, isn't.)” (Burton).

**Isocolon:** “a series of similarly structured elements having the same length” (Burton).

**Kairos:** “timing – the ability to make an argument at the right moment” (Leith, 272).

**Metanoia:** (also called *correctio*) the act of “saying something, then retracting it and qualifying it” (Leith, 272).

**Mycsterismus:** “A mock given with an accompanying gesture, such as a scornful countenance” (Burton).

**Panegyric:** “A praise speech” (Leith, 274).

**Philippic:** “an aggressive *ad hominem* [to the man/person] attacking speech” (Leith, 275)

**Pleonasmus (pleonasms):** “Use of more words than is necessary semantically. Rhetorical repetition that is grammatically superfluous” (Burton).

**Proof:** “the arguments[/evidence] available to support your case” (Leith, 275). Also a term used in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, see below.

**Prosopographia:** “The vivid description of someone's face or character. A kind of *enargia*” (Burton).

**Rhetor:** A master of rhetoric/an orator

**Rhetorical Questions:** (also called *erotema*) “a question that implies but doesn’t expect an answer”, “The rhetorical question [is used t]o affirm or deny a point strongly by asking it as a question. Generally [...] the rhetorical question includes an emotional dimension, expressing wonder, indignation, sarcasm, etc.” (Leith, 270, Burton).

**Simile:** “an explicit comparison, often (but not necessarily) employing ‘like’ or ‘as’” (Burton). Example: “yawning like a lion” (NL, 11).

**Systrophe:** “a great pile of qualities that nevertheless don’t add up to an explicitly definition” (Leith, 276). It is the method used by Milton’s narrator to describe Satan, but without naming him.

**Tricolon:** “Three parallel elements of the same [or similar] length occurring together in a series” (Burton, 277). Example: “Awake, arise, or be forever fallen” (I:330).



### The Three Appeals:

**Ethos:** “the attempt to establish a speaker’s authority with the audience” (Leith, 270).

**Logos:** “the attempt to present a plausible argument in a logical or apparently logical terms” (Leith, 272).

**Pathos:** “the attempt to move the audience’s emotions” (Leith, 274).

### *Rhetorica ad Herennium* – The six parts of speech:

**Exordium:** “is the first part of speech [...] used to establish the speaker’s bona fides and get the audience on side” (Leith, 270).

**Narration:** “is the second part of a speech, setting out the facts as generally understood” (Leith, 273).

**Division:** “is the third part of speech, setting out the areas of disagreement” (Leith, 268).

**Proof:** “the fourth part of a speech [in which your] argument [is] advanced” (Leith, 275).

**Refutation:** “the fifth part of speech, in which you attack your opponent’s arguments” (Leith, 275).

**Peroration:** “the final part of an argument, the summing up” (Leith, 274).

## Appendix: Quotations

For greater ease of presentation, the font size and page layout have been adjusted accordingly.

### Full quotations from Chapter One:

#### 1. *Paradise Lost*, Book I:27-83:

Say first, for the heaven hides nothing from thy view	Hurled headlong flaming from the ethereal sky
Nor the deep tract of hell, say first what cause	With hideous ruin and combustion down
Move out grand parents in that state,	To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
Favoured of heaven so highly, to fall off	In adamantine chains and penal fire,
From their creator, and transgress his will	Who durst deft the omnipotent to arms.
For one restraint, lord of the world besides?	Nine times the space that measures day and night
Who first seduced them to that foul revolt?	To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
The infernal serpent; he it was, whose guile	Lay vanquished, rolling in the fiery gulf
Stirred up with envy and revenge, deceived	Confounded though immortal: but his doom
The mother of mankind, what time his pride	Reserved him to more wrath; for now the thought
Had cast him out from heaven, with all his host	Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
Of rebel angels, by who aid aspiring	Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes
To set himself above his peers,	That witnessed huge affliction and dismay
He trusted to have equalled the most high,	Mixed with obdurate pride and steadfast hate:
If he opposed; and with ambitious aim	At once as far as angels' ken he views
Against the throne and monarchy of God	The dismal situation waste and wild,
Raised impious war in heaven and battle proud	A dungeon horrible, on all sides round
With vain attempt. Him the almighty power	As one great furnace flamed, yet from those flames

No light, but rather darkness visible  
 Served only to discover sights of woe,  
 Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace  
 And rest can never dwell, hope never comes  
 That comes to all; but torture without end  
 Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed  
 With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed:  
 Such place eternal justice had prepared  
 For those rebellious, here their prison ordained  
 In utter darkness, and their portion set  
 As far removed from God and the light of heaven

As from the centre thrice to the utmost pole.  
 O how unlike the place from whence they fell!  
 There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelmed  
 With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,  
 He soon discerns, and weltering by his side  
 One next himself in power, and next in crime,  
 Long after known in Palestine, and named  
 Beelzebub. To whom the arch-enemy,  
 And thence in heaven called Satan, with bold words  
 Breaking the horrid silence thus began

## 2. *Paradise Lost*, Book I:84-124:

If thou beest he; but O how fallen! How changed  
 From him, who in happy realms of light  
 Clothed with transcendent brightness didst outshine  
 Myriads though bright: if he whom mutual league,  
 United thoughts and counsels, equal hope  
 And hazard in the glorious enterprise,  
 Joined with me once, now misery have joined  
 In equal ruin: into what pit thou seest  
 From what height fallen, so much the stronger proved  
 He with his thunder: and till then who knew  
 The force of those dire arms? yet not for those,

Nor what the potent victor in his rage  
 Can else inflict, do I repent or change,  
 Though changed in outward lustre; that fixed mind  
 And high disdain, from sense of injured merit,  
 That with the mightiest raised me to contend,  
 And to fierce contention brought along  
 Innumerable force of spirits armed  
 That durst dislike his reign, and me preferring,  
 His utmost power with adverse power opposed  
 In dubious battle on the plains of heaven,  
 And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?

All is not lost; the unconquerable will,  
 And study of revenge, immortal hate,  
 And courage never to submit or yield:  
 And what is else not to be overcome?  
 That glory never shall his wrath or might  
 Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace  
 With suppliant knee, and deify his power,  
 Who from the terror of this arm so late  
 Doubted his empire, that were low indeed,  
 That were an ignominy and shame beneath

This downfall; since by fate the strength of gods  
 And this empyreal substance cannot fail,  
 Since through experience of this great event  
 In arms not worse, in the foresight much advanced,  
 We may with more successful hope resolve  
 To wage war by force of guild eternal war  
 Irreconcilable, to our grand foe,  
 Who now triumphs, and in the excess of joy  
 Sole reigning holds the tyranny of heaven.

### Full quotations from Chapter Three:

#### 1. *Paradise Lost*, Book IX:568-612:

Empress of this fair world, resplendent Eve,  
 Easy to me it is to tell the all  
 What thou command'st, and right thou shouldst be obeyed:  
 I was at first as other beasts that graze  
 The trodden herb, of abject thoughts and low,  
 As was my food, nor aught but food discerned  
 Or sex, and apprehended nothing high:  
 Till on a day roving the field, I chanced  
 A goodly tree far distant to behold

Loaden with fruit of fairest colours mixed,  
 Ruddy and gold brown: I nearer drew to gaze;  
 When from the boughs a savoury odour blown,  
 Grateful to appetite, more please my sense  
 Than smell of sweetest fennel, or the teats  
 Of ewe or goat dropping with milk at even,  
 Unsucked of lamb or kid, that tend their play.  
 To satisfy the sharp desire I had  
 Of tasting those fair apples, I resolved

Not to defer; hunger and thirst at once,	Of reason in my inward powers, and speech
Powerful persuaders, quickened at the scent	Wanted not long, though to this shape retained.
Of that alluring fruit, urged me so keen.	Thenceforth to speculations high or deep
About the mossy trunk I wound me soon,	I turned my thoughts, and with capacious mind
For high from the ground the branches would require	Considered all things visible in heaven,
Thy utmost reach, or Adam's: round the tree	Or earth, or middle, all things fair and good;
All other beasts that saw, with like desire	But all that fair and good in thy divine
Longing and envying stood, but could not reach.	Semblance, and in thy beauty's heavenly ray
Amid the tree now got, where plenty hung	United I beheld; no fair to thine
Tempting so nigh, to pluck and eat my fill	Equivalent of second, which compelled
I spared not, for such pleasure till that hour	Me thus, though importune perhaps, to come
At feed or fountain never had I found.	And gaze, and worship thee of right declared
Sated at length, ere long I might perceive	Sovereign of creatures, universal dame.
Strange alteration in me, to degree	

## 2. *Northern Lights*, pgs. 339-340:

"That's why I love you best," she said to Iofur Raknison, "because you're passionate and strong as well as clever. And I just had to leave him and come and tell you, because I don't want him ruling the bears. It ought to be you. And there *is* a way of taking me away from him and making me your daemon, but you wouldn't know what it was unless I told you, and you might do the usual thing about fighting bears like him that've been out-cast; I mean, not fight him properly, but kill him with fire-hurlers or something. And if you did that, I'd just go out like a light and die with him."

"But you – how can –"

"I *can* become your daemon," she said, "but only if you defeat Iorek Byrnison in single combat. Then his strength will flow into you, and my mind will flow into yours, and we'll be like one person, thinking each other's thoughts; and you can send me miles away to spy for you, or keep me here by your side, whichever you like. And I'd help you lead the bears and capture Bolvangar, if you like, and make them

create more daemons for your favourite bears; or if you'd rather be the only bear with a daemon, we could destroy Bolvangar forever. We could do anything, Iofur Raknison, you and me together!"

All the time she was holding Pantalaimon in her pocket with a trembling hand, and he was keeping as still as he could, in the smallest mouse-form he had ever assumed.

Iofur Raknison was pacing up and down the hall with an air of explosive excitement.

### 3. *Northern Lights*, pgs. 367-368:

"I'll tell you something if you tell me something," she said. "You're my father, en't you?"

"Yes. So what?"

"So you should have told me before, that's what. You shouldn't hide things like that from people, because they feel stupid when they find out, and that's cruel. What difference would it make if I knew I was your daughter? You could have said it years ago. You could've told me and asked me to keep it secret, and I would, no matter how young I was, I'd have done that if you asked me. I'd have been so proud nothing would've torn it out of me, if you asked me to keep it secret. But you never. You let other people know, but you never told me."

"Who did tell you?"

"John Faa."

"Did he tell you about your mother?"

"Yes."

"Then there's not much left for me to tell. I don't think I want to be interrogated and condemned by an insolent child. I want to hear what you've seen and done on the way here."

"I brought you the bloody alethiometer, didn't I?" Lyra burst out. She was very near to tears. "I looked after it all the way from Jordan, I did it and I treasured it, all through what's happened to us, and I learned about using it, and I carried it all this bloody way when I could've just given up and been safe, and you en't even said thank you, nor showed any sign that you're glad to see me. I don't know why I ever done it. But I did, and I kept on going, even in Iofur Raknison's stinking palace with all them bears around me I kept going, all on me own, and I tricked him into fighting with Iorek so's I could come on here for your sake... And when you *did* see me you like to fainted, as if I was some horrible thing you never wanted to see again. You en't human, Lord Asriel. You en't my *father*. My *father* wouldn't treat me like that. Fathers are supposed to love their daughters,

en't they? You don't love me, and I don't love you, and that's a fact. I love Farder Coram, and I love Byrnison; I love an armoured bear more'n I love my father. And I bet lorek Byrnison loves me more'n you do."

"You told me yourself he's only following John Faa's orders. If you're going to be sentimental I shan't waste time talking to you."

### Full quotations for Conclusion:

#### 1. *Paradise Lost*, Book XII:641-649:

They looking back, all the eastern side beheld	The world was all before them, where to choose
Of Paradise, so late their happy seat,	Their place of rest, and providence their guide:
Waved over by that flaming brand, the gate	They held in hand with wandering steps and slow,
With dreadful faces thronged and fiery arms:	Through Eden took their solitary way.
Some natural tears they dropped, but wiped them soon;	

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